

# **CONSTITUTION OF SYRO-MALABAR HIERARCHY**

**A Documental Study**

**Paul Pallath**



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**Constitution of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy:  
A Documental Study**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In recent years we have published seven documental source studies, two of them in collaboration with our erudite students Dr. George Kanjirakkatt and Dr. Joseph Kollāra respectively, touching the historical, canonical and liturgical aspects of the ecclesial heritage of the St Thomas Christians. The present work may be the last one of the series, also because the documents in the Roman archives can be consulted only after the elapse of 70 years. In this happy occasion, while raising our grateful heart to God Almighty for His abundant blessings, we would like to thank all those who have helped us for the realization of the aforementioned works in one way or another. We remember with gratitude Fr. Anthony Ward SM, at present Undersecretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Dr. Giampaolo Rigotti, archivist of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Rev. Fr. Gervasis Anithottathil and Mrs. Carla Langone for their sincere collaboration and timely help. We are deeply indebted to a number of bishops, professors, priests, religious and students for their spiritual support, critical evaluation, constant encouragement and useful insights.

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Paul Pallath

Rome, 1 November 2013  
Feast of All Saints

## ABBREVIATIONS

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <i>AAS</i> | <i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>   |
| ACO        | Archivum Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus  |
| All.       | Allegato  |
| Doc.       | Document(s)   |
| Encl.      | Enclosure   |
| CCEO       | <i>Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium</i> , AAS 82 (1990) 1033-1053; Latin English edition, CLSA, <i>Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches</i> , Washington 1992. |
| CIC 1917   | <i>Codex Iuris Canonici</i> , Pii X Iussu Digestus, Benedicti XV auctoritate promulgatus, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1917, AAS 9 (1917) 3-456.                       |
| CIC 1983   | <i>Codex Iuris Canonici</i> , AAS 75 (1983) pars 11, 1-301; Latin English edition, CLSA, <i>The Code of Canon Law</i> , Washington 1983.                              |
| IRD        | P. Pallath, <i>Important Roman Documents concerning the Catholic Church in India</i> , Kottayam 2004.   |
| OCP        | <i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>  |
| Sum.       | Summary   |

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

With the Synod of Diamper in 1599 the Eastern hierarchy was suppressed in India and Latin bishops were appointed to govern the St Thomas Christians. Following the revolt of 1653, known as the Coonan Cross Oath, the Catholic St Thomas Christians were divided between the archdiocese of Cranganore under the Portuguese patronage (*Padroado*) and the vicariate of Malabar (subsequently named Verapoly) administered by vicars apostolic under the authority of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide.

After about three centuries (1599-1886) of Western governance over the St Thomas Christians, when the Latin hierarchy was established in India on 1 September 1886, the ancient archdiocese of Cranganore was definitively suppressed, the vicariate apostolic of Verapoly was elevated to the status of a metropolitan archdiocese of the Latin Church with Quilon as its suffragan see and all the Catholic St Thomas Christians became members of the said archdiocese.<sup>1</sup> Through the apostolic letter *Quod iampridem* of 20 May 1887, Pope Leo XIII separated the Eastern Catholics from the Latin Christians of the archdiocese of Verapoly and constituted for them two Syro-Malabar vicariates apostolic, Trichur and Kottayam (later named Changanacherry),<sup>2</sup> but the vicars apostolic were still Latins: Charles Lavigne, titular bishop of Milevum and vicar apostolic of Changanacherry (1887-1896) and Adolf Edwin Medlycott, titular bishop of Tricomia and vicar apostolic of Trichur (1887-1896).

With the apostolic brief *Quae rei sacrae* of 28 July 1896 Pope Leo XIII reorganized the territory, erecting the three vicariates apostolic of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry.<sup>3</sup> Three

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Leo XIII, *Humanae salutis auctor*, 1 September 1886, *Leonis XIII Pontificis Maximi Acta*, vol. 5, Romae 1886, 164-179; *IRD*, 152-173.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leo XIII, *Quod iampridem*, 20 May 1887, *Leonis XIII Pontificis Maximi Acta*, vol. VII, Romae 1888, 106-108; *IRD*, 190-193.

<sup>3</sup> Leo XIII, *Quae rei sacrae*, 28 July 1896, *Leonis XIII Pontificis Maximi Acta*, vol. XVI, Romae 1897, 229-232; *IRD*, 194-197.

native priests were appointed as vicars apostolic: John Menacherry, titular bishop of Parai and vicar apostolic of Trichur, Mathew Makil, titular bishop of Tralli and vicar apostolic of Changanacherry and Aloysius Pareparambil, titular bishop of Tiana and vicar apostolic of Ernakulam. The Apostolic Delegate Ladislao Michele Zaleski consecrated the first three Indian bishops on 25 October 1896 in the cathedral church of Kandy in Sri Lanka, where he had the residence.

As a result of Babylonian emigration to South India most probably from the fourth century on, a distinct endogamous community, named in all important documents as Southists (recently called Knanaya), originated among the St Thomas Christians who were sometimes designated as Northists, when there emerged necessity to distinguish them from the former. When the two vicariates were erected in 1887 there were about 15,000 Southists and 100,000 Northists in the vicariate of Kottayam (Changanacherry). The antipathy and contrasts between these two groups intensified due to the attempts of the Southists spearheaded by Mathew Makil, under the aegis of the Carmelite bishops and missionaries of Verapoly, for the creation of a separate vicariate for them, governed by a Carmelite vicar apostolic. In such a difficult situation the appointment of the Southist priest Mathew Makil as the vicar apostolic of Changanacherry in 1896 provoked protests and agitations of the Northists, which continued until the erection of the Southist vicariate of Kottayam on 29 August 1911, with the transfer of Vicar Apostolic Mathew Makil to the new vicariate of Kottayam and the appointment of Thomas Kurialacherry as the vicar apostolic of Changanacherry.<sup>4</sup> Thus from 1911 on, the Syro-Malabar Church consisted of four vicariates directly dependent on the Apostolic See.

Those who are not very familiar with canon law and the exact juridical nature of vicariates apostolic at times erroneously consider the erection of Syro-Malabar vicariates with the

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<sup>4</sup> For the history, background and all other details, see P. Pallath & G. Kanjirakkatt, *Origin of the Southist Vicariat of Kottayam; Acts and Facts*, Kottayam 2011.



appointment of native vicars apostolic as the constitution of Syro-Malabar hierarchy. Normally vicariates apostolic are temporary ecclesiastical circumscriptions, especially in mission territories, where the ecclesiastical situation is not mature enough for the erection of dioceses, because of special circumstances. The vicars apostolic are titular bishops appointed by the Roman Pontiff; they directly depend on the Holy See and exercise jurisdiction in the name of the Roman Pontiff.<sup>5</sup> Hence, in the technical sense a hierarchy is considered to have been established for a country or for a *sui iuris* Church, only when at least one diocese or eparchy is constituted. Accordingly the Syro-Malabar Church obtained a hierarchy only on 21 December 1923, when Pope Pius XI erected the aforementioned four vicariates as dioceses. The precise scope of this book is to present the historical background and other relevant facts related to the epoch-making event of the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy, which revolutionized the fate of the Catholic Church in India.

We will highlight other relevant facts and briefly outline the remaining history of the Syro-Malabar Church until the erection of hierarchy according to the chronological progression of events, as brief introductions to each of the documents presented in this book. We give below some further preliminary considerations which can help readers to comprehend the documents.

## 1. Preliminary Considerations

### 1.1. The Expression Suriani

Suriani is the Malayalam word for Syriac or Syrian, which was the liturgical language of the Eastern Christians of India until the introduction of local languages in 1962. Like the expressions "Latin Church" and "Latin Christians" or simply "Latins", formerly "Suriani Church", "Suriani Catholics", "Suriani Christians" and "Suriani" were used to indicate the St Thomas

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. CIC 1917, cc. 293-311; CIC 1983, c. 371 § 1 & 381; an exarchy or exarchate is the Oriental equivalent of a vicariate apostolic and an exarch that of a vicar apostolic (cf. CCEO, cc. 311-321).

Christians and their Church. From the second half of the nineteenth century on, the terms "Suriani" or "Suriani Catholics" were consistently used even in the documents and communications of the Holy See until the name Syro-Malabar became prevalent. Especially after the schisms of Rokos (1861-1862) and Mellus (1874-1882) the Holy See avoided the expression "Chaldean" and preferred the word "Suriani" so as to indicate that the Indian Eastern Church had no hierarchical connection with the Chaldean Church. In our English translation we have maintained all the aforementioned expressions, as they are found in the original documents.

## 1.2. Roman Pontiffs and the Apostolic See

The documents presented in this book to some extent cover the history of the Syro-Malabar Church from 1896 to 1923. During this period the Roman Pontiffs Leo XIII (1878-1903), St Pius X (1903-1914), Benedict XV (1914-1922) and Pius XI (1922-1939) who governed the universal Church, were involved in historical decisions which determined the progress and development of the Syro-Malabar Church.

At the time of the appointment of native bishops in 1896, like the other Eastern Catholic Churches, the Syro-Malabar Church was also under the authority of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide for the Affairs of the Oriental Rite, erected by Pope Pius IX on 6 January 1862. The Latin and Oriental sections of Propaganda Fide had the same prefect, but two separate bishops secretaries. The prefects of Propaganda Fide during the period under our study were: Mieczyslaw Halka Ledochowski (1892-1902), Girolamo Maria Gotti (1902-1916) and Domenico Serafini (1916-1918).

On 1 May 1917 by the *motu proprio Dei Providentis* Pope Benedict XV erected the 'Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church' and all the Eastern Catholic Churches, of course including the Syro-Malabar Church, were placed under its authority. As the Pope himself decided, the Oriental section of Propaganda Fide ceased to exist on 30 November 1917 and the new Congregation began to function from 1 December 1917. Naturally the competence over the Syro-Malabar Church passed to the new

Congregation, to which was also transferred in the course of time the pertinent documents concerning the Eastern Churches. Since at that time the Roman Pontiff himself was the Prefect of the Oriental Congregation, its administrative head was a cardinal secretary. During the period of our study the secretaries were: Nicolò Marini (1917-1922) and Giovanni Tacci Porcelli (1922-1927).

### **1.3. Apostolic Delegates in India**

Four Apostolic Delegates accomplished their ministry as representatives of the Pope and the Holy See during the period under consideration. At that time there was only one Apostolic Delegate for all the countries in the Indian subcontinent, designated by the general name "East Indies", which included different countries in the Indian subcontinent or Southeast Asia. As we have seen above, when the first Syro-Malabar bishops were appointed in 1896 the Apostolic Delegate of East Indies was Ladislao Michele Zaleski (1892-1916), titular archbishop of Thebae (Tebe), who had his headquarters at Kandy in Sri Lanka. On 7 December 1916 Zaleski was transferred and appointed as titular patriarch of the Latin patriarchate of Antioch (created in 1098), the seat of which was at the Basilica of St Mary Major in Rome, after the fall of Antioch in 1268. Patriarch Zaleski was very influential in the Roman Curia and the Holy See highly valued his opinion on important matters concerning the Indian Church. After Zaleski, Pietro Fumasoni Biondi (1916-1919) and Pietro Pisani (1919-1924) exercised their ministry as apostolic delegates in East Indies.

### **1.4. Scope, Method and Content**

The scope of this work is to make original sources available to scholars concerning the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy with the intention of promoting objective critical studies. We will present the Report (*ponenza*) presented to the plenary assembly of the Oriental Congregation held on 3 December 1923 and the summary attached to it, the decisions of the said assembly and the apostolic constitution erecting the Syro-Malabar hierarchy.

After this general introduction and the list of documents with indication of sources, the book is divided into two parts: the first part presents the English translation of the documents, while the second part is dedicated to the original texts. In the second part the documents are reproduced in the original language with the same number and English heading, so that those who wish to consult the original, can easily do so. Since all the documents are also reproduced in the original language, this book can be consulted even by non-English speaking scholars. Footnotes and explanations found in some of the documents are maintained both in the English translation and in the originals. Footnotes and explanations added by the Author to the English version are put in square brackets [ ]. The indexes at the end of this book are based on the English version alone.

## **2. Some Fundamental Themes Frequently Treated in the Documents**

In order to help the readers to comprehend the content of the documents in a better manner we give here a brief outline of the main themes often debated about in connection with the constitution of Syro-Malabar hierarchy. They are: the maturity of the Syro-Malabar Church and the opportunity of granting it a stable hierarchy, the choice of the metropolitan see and the special status requested for the Southist vicariate of Kottayam.

### **2.1. The Maturity of the Syro-Malabar Church and the Opportunity of a Stable Hierarchy**

After about three centuries of Latin governance (1599-1896) when the first native bishops were appointed in 1896 the liturgical, spiritual and canonical heritage of the Syro-Malabar was in a hybrid state, which stirred up doubts about the ecclesial nature of this Church and its maturity for obtaining a stable hierarchy. The Eucharistic liturgy (Qurbana) existed in a highly latinized form with many modifications, omissions and interpolations mainly made by the Synod of Diamper (1599) and Bishop Francis Ros SJ,

the first Latin bishop of the St Thomas Christians (1599-1624).<sup>6</sup> In connection with the holy Qurbana, the Eucharistic bread and wine, the manner of holy communion, liturgical year and calendar, liturgical vestments, religious feasts, fast and abstinence, sacred art and architecture, etc were all modified in tune with the Roman tradition and Western customs.<sup>7</sup>

In accordance with the order of the provincial council of Goa (1585) and the Synod of Diamper, the Latin Ritual was translated into Syriac and was introduced in Malabar. In fact the theology, liturgy and discipline of the sacraments were completely replaced with those of the Roman tradition. For ordinations, consecration of churches, blessing of the holy oils and other episcopal ceremonies the Roman Pontifical was used in the language of Latin, since the Latin bishops did not know Syriac.<sup>8</sup> The Divine Office was of East Syrian tradition, but with the modifications and corrections made by the Synod of Diamper. Almost all the sacramentals, paraliturgical ceremonies and popular devotions were conducted with Roman liturgical books translated into Syriac, sometimes with local adaptations.

When the three native vicars apostolic were appointed in 1896, it was not evident which Pontifical had to be used in the Syro-Malabar Church for episcopal ceremonies such as ordinations, consecration of churches and altars, consecration of Chrism (holy Myron) etc. The first bishops had no doubt or hesitation about the matter; they unanimously decided to translate

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<sup>6</sup> P. J. Podipara, "The Present Syro-Malabar Liturgy: Menezian or Rozian?", *OCP* 23 (1957) 313-322; J. Vellian, "The Synod of Diamper and the Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church", in G. Nedungatt, ed., *The Synod of Diamper Revisited*, Rome 2001, 175-181 & 185-191; P. Pallath, *The Eucharistic Liturgy of the St Thomas Christians and the Synod of Diamper*, Kottayam 2008, 85-154.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. P. Pallath, *The Eucharistic Liturgy of the St Thomas Christians and the Synod of Diamper*, 155-209.

<sup>8</sup> P. Palalath, "The Sacraments of the Church of St Thomas Christians in India and the Synod of Diamper", *Ephrem's Theological Journal*, vol. 11, no. 2 (October 2007) 121-146; *The Provincial Councils of Goa and the Church of St Thomas Christians*, Kottayam 2005, 115-129; J. Vellian, "The Synod of Diamper and the Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church", 181-184 & 190-193.

the Roman Pontifical into Syriac, since at that time all other liturgical ceremonies of their Church were in Syriac. However, they did not succeed to make a standard translation and to get approval from Propaganda Fide. Consequently they continued to use the Roman Pontifical in Latin language itself for all episcopal ceremonies.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly there was confusion with regard to the law to be used in the nascent Syro-Malabar Church, which had no particular code of canon law. In fact at that time the ecclesial life of the Church was mainly regulated in accordance with the norms ensuing from the acts and decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599), the statutes of Francis Ros SJ (1606) and the statutes of Archbishop Leonard Mellano OCD (1879). Such liturgical and canonical predicament of the Syro-Malabar Church, especially the uncertainty concerning the Pontifical and the code of canon law to be applied, contributed to the delay in the constitution of hierarchy.<sup>10</sup>

In spite of the aforementioned problems, after the appointment of native bishops the Syro-Malabar Church made rapid progress in every other aspect of ecclesial life. All the apostolic delegates who exercised their ministry in India at that time unanimously and insistently pointed out that the Syro-Malabar vicariates were better than most of the Latin dioceses in East Indies under all respects and asked the Holy See to constitute the Syro-Malabar hierarchy as soon as possible. Thanks also to their efforts, gradually all doubts about the maturity of the Syro-Malabar Church was cleared and the Holy See proceeded to the much desired erection of hierarchy.

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<sup>9</sup> For details, P. Pallath & J. Kollara, *Roman Pontifical into Syriac and the Beginning of Liturgical Reform in the Syro-Malabar Church: History of the Revision and Publication of the Chaldean and Syro-Malabar Pontifical*, Kottayam 2012.

<sup>10</sup> The Syro-Malabar hierarchy was constituted thirty-five years after the erection of the first two vicariates apostolic, while the Syro-Malankara hierarchy was erected only 3 months after the creation of two ordinariates.

## 2.2. The Choice of the Metropolitan See

Another frequently debated question was the choice of the metropolitan see of the Syro-Malabar Church. Originally the Apostolic Delegate Fumasoni Biondi and Pietro Pisani proposed the vicariate of Changanacherry as the metropolitan see, because after the appoint of Mar Thomas Kurialacherry as vicar apostolic, the said see mounted to the first place as regards fervent religious life, number of Christian faithful, priestly and religious vocations, monasteries and convents, educational and charitable institutions, etc.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand Ladislao Michele Zaleski, former apostolic delegate in India and afterwards titular patriarch of the Latin Patriarchate of Antioch, residing in Rome, persistently insisted that Ernakulam should be the metropolitan see because of its central geographical position of the then Syro-Malabar Church and because of its political and economic importance, being a strategic port and the greatest city in Kerala.<sup>12</sup> In the plenary meeting of 3 December 1923 the Cardinals opted for Ernakulam not only because of Zaleski's patronage, but also because Ernakulam appeared to be more acceptable to Kottayam, due to the bitter conflicts and traditional rivalry between Southists and Northists, especially during the administration of Mar Mathew Makil, when he was vicar apostolic of Changanacherry (1896-1911).

## 2.3. The Status of the Southist Vicariate of Kottayam

As we have already indicated, Pope Pius X created the Southist vicariate of Kottayam on 29 August 1911 through the apostolic letter "In universi Christiani".<sup>13</sup> When the eventual constitution of a stable hierarchy for the Syro-Malabar Church was considered in Rome, the then Southist vicar apostolic of Kottayam, Mar Alexander Chulaparambil (1914-1951) wrote to the former and then Apostolic Delegates, authorities of the "Congregation for

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Doc. 2.11. & 2. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Doc. 2.13. & 2.14.

<sup>13</sup> At the time of the constitution of the Syro-Malabar hierarchy in 1923 the Southist vicariate of Kottayam had about 35,000 faithful, 44 churches including chapels and 43 diocesan priests.

the Oriental Church” and to Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) himself, requesting that the vicariate of Kottayam be elevated to the status of a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See or of an archdiocese without any suffragan see.<sup>14</sup> He claimed such a special status for Kottayam, independent of the future metropolitan of the Syro-Malabar Church for the same reasons, for which the separate Southist vicariate was created in 1911. Patriarch Zaleski and the Apostolic Delegate Pisani were opposed to granting any special status to Kottayam; only the former Apostolic Delegate Fumasoni Biondi supported it. The plenary meeting of the Oriental Congregation held on 3 December 1923 discarded the claims of Chulaparambil and unanimously decided to make the vicariate of Kottayam a normal suffragan diocese of the metropolitan see of Ernakulam.

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Documents from 2-15 to 2.20.

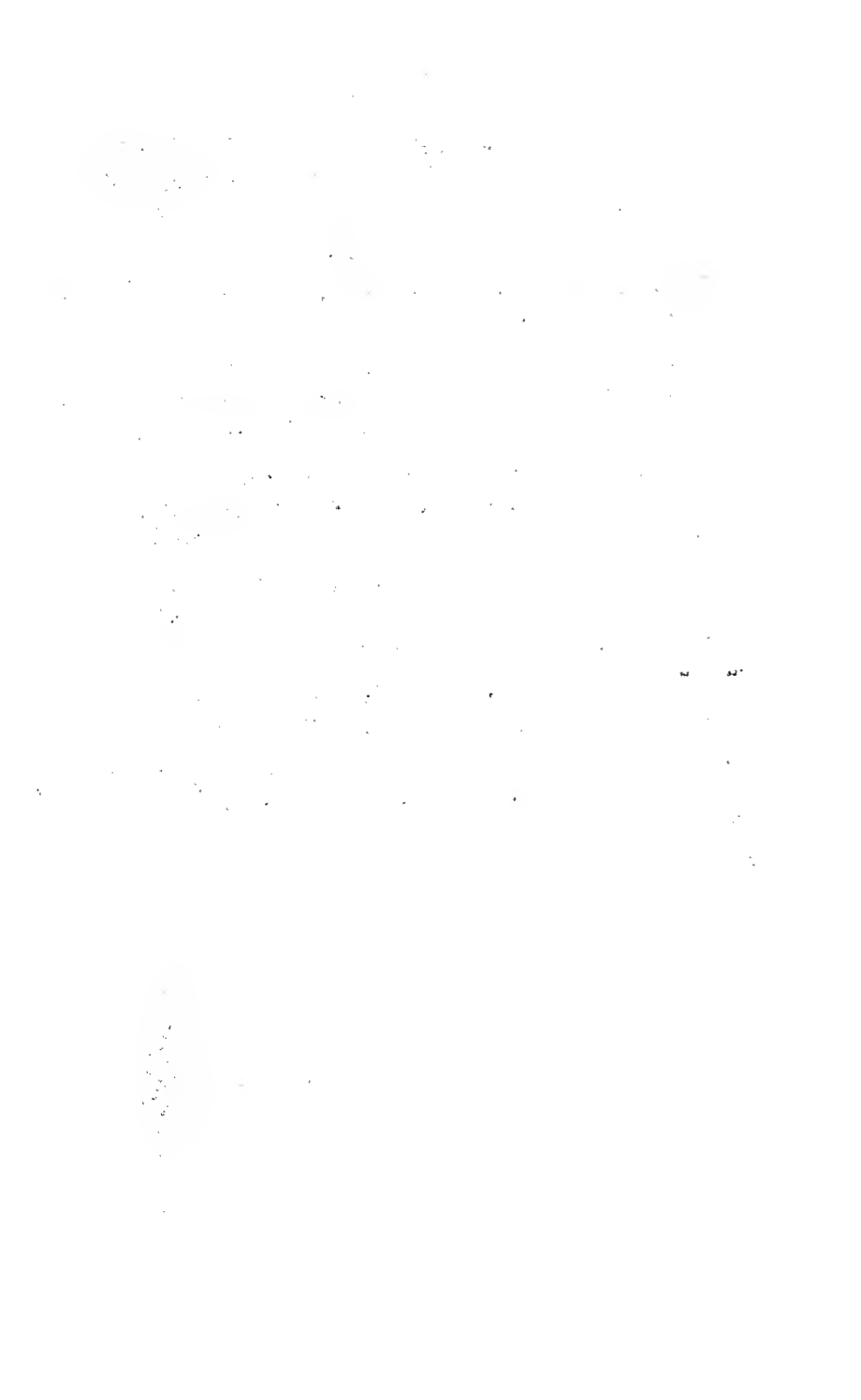


## LIST OF DOCUMENTS WITH INDICATION OF SOURCES

1. Report of Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli, Presented to the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for the Oriental Church on 3 December 1923, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 571-587.
- 2. Summary (Documents Attached to the Report)**
  - 2.1. Comparative Statistical Table of the Dioceses in South India, Summary No. I, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, p. 595.
  - 2.2. Statistical Table of the Four Vicariates Sent by Apostolic Delegate Pisani, 20 September 1922, Summary No. II, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 596-599.
  - 2.3. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Changanacherry, Summary No. III, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 600-603.
  - 2.4. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Ernakulam since 1897, Summary No. IV, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 604-608.
  - 2.5. Statistics of Vicariate Apostolic of Trichur, Summary No. V, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 609-612.
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  - 2.8. Letter of Apostolic Delegate Zaleski Requesting the Erection of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, 5 December 1908, Summary No. VIII, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 615-618.
  - 2.9. Letter of Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani Transmitting the Petitions of the Priests of Changanacherry and Ernakulam, Requesting the Erection of Hierarchy, 3 January 1921, Summary No. IX, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 619-620.

- 2.9.1. Petition of the Priests of Changanacherry Presented to Apostolic Delegate Pisani Requesting the Erection of Hierarchy, 17 November 1920, Enclosure I to Summary No. IX, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 621-623.
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- 2.11. Opinion of Fumasoni Biondi Favouring Changanacherry as the Metropolitan See, 28 December 1918, Summary No. XI, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 628-632.
- 2.12. Opinion of Pietro Pisani Favouring Changanacherry as the Metropolitan See, 20 July 1922, Summary No. XII, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 633-634.
- 2.13. Vote of Zaleski on the Constitution of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, 27 June 1922, Summary No. XIII, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 635-637.
- 2.14. Additional Notes of Zaleski about the Erection of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, Summary No. XIV, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 638-640.
- 2.15. Letter of Alexander Chulaparambil to the Oriental Congregation Requesting Special Status for Kottayam, 8 December 1920, Summary No. XV, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 640-641.
- 2.16. Joint Letter of Syro-Malabar Vicars Apostolic Sent on 1 March 1911 and Forwarded again on 8 December 1920 by Chulaparambil in Support of His Requests, Summary No. XVI, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 642-646.

- 2.17. Letter of Chulaparambil to Fumasoni Biondi Requesting Special Status for Kottayam, 24 May 1922, Summary No. XVII, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 647-648.
- 2.18. Observations of Fumasoni Biondi about the Request of Chulaparambil, May 1922, Summary No. XVIII, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 648-650.
- 2.19. Petition of Alexander Chulaparambil to Pope Pius XI Requesting Special Status for Kottayam, 16 October 1922, Summary No. XIX, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 650-652.
- 2.20. Letter of Fumasoni Biondi Transmitting the Aforementioned Petition of Chulaparambil to the Oriental Congregation, Summary No. XX, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 652-653.
3. Final Observations of Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani concerning Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, 12 November 1923, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 655-659.
4. Decisions of the Plenary Meeting of the Oriental Congregation, 3 December 1923, ACO, *Ponenze* 1923, pp. 589-590.
5. Apostolic Constitution *Romani Pontifices* Erecting the Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church, 21 December 1923, *AAS* 7 (1924) 257-262; *IRD* 206-219.



## PART ONE

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### ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS

In part one we present the English translation of the Report (*ponenza*) of Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli, presented to the plenary assembly of the Oriental Congregation on 3 December 1923, the Summary attached to the aforesaid Report containing 20 documents, the final observation of Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani, the decisions of the plenary assembly and the apostolic constitution *Romani Pontifices* erecting the hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church.



Year 1923 – No. 9., SURIANI-MALABAR, Prot. No. 10807

**SACRED CONGREGATION  
FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCH**

**RELATOR**

**The Most Eminent and the Most Reverend Lord Cardinal  
VINCENZO VANNUTELLI**

**REPORT WITH SUMMARY**

**On the Constitution of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy  
for the Syro-Malabarians**

November 1923

**ROME  
Vatican Polyglot Press**

## 1. Report of Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli, Presented to the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for the Oriental Church on 3 December 1923

*This is the Report on the constitution of Syro-Malabar hierarchy presented by Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli to the general meeting of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church held on 3 December 1923, in which were present the most eminent Cardinals Antonio Vico, Willem Marinus Van Rossum, Raffaele Scapinelli di Leguigno, Giovanni Tacci Porcelli (Secretary of the Oriental Congregation), Giovanni Vincenzo Bonzano, Francis Aidan Gasquet and Franziskus Ehrle. After a brief history of the origin and development of the then existing four vicariates: Changanacherry, Ernakulam, Kottayam and Trichur, this Report considers the main questions: the opportunity of constituting Syro-Malabar hierarchy, the choice of metropolitan see and the special status requested for the Southist vicariate of Kottayam.*

Most Eminent and Most Reverend Lords,

1. In 1886 with the Bull "Humanae salutis Auctor" Leo XIII founded the Catholic hierarchy in the Indies and elevated the Latin vicariate apostolic of Verapoly to archiepiscopal see, adding to it all the Christianities of the so-called Suriani rite which, since the time of Clement VIII, namely from the time of the Synod of Diamper, were under the extraordinary jurisdiction of the archbishop of Goa.

Having been constituted the (Latin) hierarchy in India, agitations of the Surianis of Malabar to have bishops of their rite intensified more and more and these also started to appear more justified for the fact that many of the recently created Indian dioceses did not count more than 5-7-10 thousand souls while the Catholic Surianis already amounted to about 260.000 at that time.

2. Therefore, following the favourable reports of the then Apostolic Delegate Msgr. A. Agliardi, which confirmed what the Apostolic Visitor Msgr. Ignazio Persico had already ascertained in 1877, in the general assembly of 20 December 1886 the S.



Congregation of Propaganda decided to separate the ecclesiastical administration of the Malabarians of Suriani rite from that of the Latins, erecting for the Surianis two vicariates apostolic to be entrusted however to Latin bishops.

Thus with the brief "Quod iampridem" of 29 May 1887, two vicariates apostolic were erected for the Surianis of Malabar: one in the North with residence in *Trichur* (entrusted to Msgr. Medlycott), the other in the South with residence in *Kottayam* (entrusted to Msgr. Lavigne SJ)<sup>1</sup>, separated only with ritual division from the archdiocese of Verapoly, in whose territory they extended, and with territorial division among them, the boundary being the river Alwaye.

3. However, persisting the movement and increasing the requests of the Surianis for bishops of their rite, and since by now they found authoritative patrons in Rome – such as the Most Eminent Cardinal Ignatius Persico, who, as Apostolic Visitor of Malabar in 1877, had been the first to point out the necessity to adhere somehow to the insistent aspirations of the Surianis, and Msgr. (afterwards Most Eminent) A. Agliardi, former Apostolic Delegate, thanks to his reports the abovementioned separation of the Surianis from the ecclesiastical administration of the Latins had been made in 1886) – in the general assembly of 23 March 1896 the S. Congregation of Propaganda decided to elevate the (number of) Suriani vicariates apostolic to three and to entrust their care to *titular bishops of their rite and nation who were directly subjected to the Holy See*.

With the brief "Quae rei sacrae" of 28 July 1896, having been suppressed the two vicariates created in 1887, three vicariates were erected: *Trichur*, *Ernakulam* and *Changanacherry*, effecting among them a precise division of parishes and entrusting them to titular bishops of the same rite: *Trichur* to Msgr. Menacherry, *Ernakulam* to Msgr. Pareparambil, *Changanacherry* to Msgr. Makil (Southist).

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<sup>1</sup> Who, on his own authority, then established the see in Changanacherry.

4. However, while in the two vicariates apostolic of Trichur and Ernakulam thus the peace seemed to have been established, in that of Changanacherry, which had been entrusted to a Southist bishop, vigorous and persistent disagreements emerged because of the two castes (or better races) of the Northists and Southists<sup>2</sup>, each one of them, but especially the Northist race, badly tolerated to be subjected to a bishop of the other nationality.

In order to put an end to such disagreements, in the general assembly of 31 July 1911 decision was taken to dismember all the Southist parishes and churches from the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry and also from that of Ernakulam, and to erect a new vicariate apostolic in Kottayam exclusively for the Southists. This decision, approved by the Holy Father Pius X of holy memory, was made executive with the brief "In universi Christiani" of 29 August 1911 and on the same date the then vicar apostolic of Changanacherry, Msgr. Matthew Makil was transferred to the new vicariate, appointing in his place Msgr. Kurialacherry, who is still there now.

5. Thus for the Catholic Surianis of Malabar the present ecclesiastical situation began: three Northist vicariates apostolic, with territorial boundaries, but only with personal jurisdiction, Trichur, Changanacherry, Ernakulam and one for the Southists with the see in Kottayam. All these four vicariates are within the boundaries of the Latin archdiocese of Verapoly. Outside the territory of the said archdiocese there is only the Suriani church of Aleppey, which belongs to the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry and it is in the territory of the Latin diocese of Cochin.

As regards the civil dependence: the greater part of the territory of these vicariates is in the kingdom of Travancore.

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<sup>2</sup> According to what is at great length exposed in the report of July 1911, the distinction between these two groups, rather than of caste, would correctly be of race or nationality. See Summary, no. 7, some notes extracted from the said report. However, His Most Reverend Excellency, Msgr. Zaleski, asserts that they are really castes and his judgment is also shared by the present Apostolic Delegate, Msgr. P. Pisani. See also Summary, no. 16.

The vicariates of Changanacherry and Kottayam are completely in the territory of Travancore; that of Ernakulam is in the territory of Travancore, Cochin and English Cochin; that of Trichur is entirely in the state of Cochin.

The present vicars apostolic, arranging them according to the number of the faithful, which is given in the statistical table of Msgr. Pisani (see Summary, no. 2), are:

in *Changanacherry* Msgr. Thomas Kurialacherry, titular bishop of Pella, former student of the Pontifical Urban College, elected in 1911, as it has been said;

in *Trichur* Msgr. Francis Vazhapilly, titular bishop of Philadelphia, elected in April 1921;

in *Ernakulam* Msgr. Augustine Kandathil, titular bishop of Arad, appointed coadjutor with the right of succession in August 1911, succeeded Msgr. Pareparambil in December 1919;

in *Kottayam* Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil, titular bishop of Busiris, elected in July 1914.

6. The provision, which is now proposed to the decision of Your Most Reverend Eminences, is the much invoked erection of the hierarchy or at least the elevation of the present vicariates apostolic to residential sees.

Since 1908, still before the Southist vicariate apostolic was erected, Msgr. Ladislao Zaleski, Apostolic Delegate of the Indies at that time, advised the S. Congregation of Propaganda to erect the said vicariates apostolic as dioceses. He, who had even been previously against the creation of the vicariates apostolic of the rite, in April 1908, being in Rome, wrote to the S. Congregation, "... in the already past 12 years of experience the (Suriani) native bishops have appeared capable and even not inferior to more than a European bishop. Therefore the elevation of these vicariates to residential dioceses has by now become necessary because the position of vicars apostolic puts these bishops in a condition of inferiority in relation to the other bishops of south India – all of them are resident bishops – and this inferiority discourages them and this is also felt by the clergy, especially as these three

vicariates<sup>3</sup> are not only the most important of all the dioceses in India, but also they have an organization, more developed than that of the other dioceses of this Delegation and more similar to the normal one".

The same Delegate, in a letter that he then sent from Mangalore in December 1908, exposing the progress made by those vicariates after the concession of the titular bishops of the rite, validly supported the opportunity to erect them as dioceses, saying that this was a question of justice, given the comparison with the Indian dioceses (cf. Sum., no. 8).

7. However the things were postponed because, when the then archbishop of Verapoly, Msgr. Bernard (sic) Arginzonis of the Carmelites was consulted,<sup>4</sup> he responded that, in his opinion, before granting the hierarchy to the Surianis, they should have their own liturgical books and possess a Code in which the disciplinary norms, to which the Syro-Malabarians are bound, would clearly be determined.

The said proposal was partly accepted by the S. Congregation which wrote to Msgr. Zaleski on 26 August 1909 asking him to insist at the vicariates apostolic that they might complete the translation of the Pontifical (from Latin into Suriani), started by Msgr. Menacherry, and moreover to exhort them so that, making use of the norms already laid down by the Synod of Diamper and adapting them with opportune modifications for the present times, they might compile, under the direction of the Apostolic Delegate, a scheme of Synod, to be then submitted to the revision of the Holy See, thus establishing the proper law of the Suriani Church.

However such suggestions, for various reasons, did not get the hoped for result. Still today the Suriani bishops, following the ancient local custom, confer the Orders and also the Confirmation using the Roman Pontifical, and they have not yet compiled the scheme of a synod suggested by the S. Congregation.

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<sup>3</sup> At that time the Southist vicariate had not yet been erected.

<sup>4</sup> [Felipe Arginzonis y Astobiza OCD was archbishop of Verapoly from 1897 to 1918].

8. Nevertheless the good organization and the comforting development obtained in the Malabar vicariates after more than a quarter of century and the fact that they were entrusted to bishops of the same rite, widely justify the insistent requests that their erection into residential dioceses may not be further delayed. All the more so because, according to the judgment of the present Apostolic Delegate, the constitution of those vicariates into dioceses and hierarchy is an almost indispensable condition so that their Ordinaries can assemble and in point of fact present a scheme of canonical Code, which is desired by them and suggested by the Holy See.

The judgment expressed above by the Most Reverend Msgr. Zaleski, that the said vicariates apostolic are to be numbered among the best dioceses in India, was also later on shared by the Apostolic Delegate Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi, as it is by the present Most Reverend Delegate Msgr. Pietro Pisani. Therefore it would not seem necessary that there should be further delay for elevating these vicariates to the rank of residential dioceses, also because at the beginning of next year a *Plenary Council* will have to be held in Bangalore, to which the present Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic, who already in 1921 took lively part in the Plenary Meeting of the Episcopate of the East Indies, will also be invited. Therefore it would be inopportune if it had to happen again in such an occasion, what the Most Reverend Msgr. Zaleski affirms to have deplored at that time, that is, the Suriani bishops, being only vicars, have to occupy the last seats, while for the number of their diocesans (faithful) and also for the organization of their vicariates they are superior to most of the Indian bishops (see Sum., no. 1, comparative statistical note taken from "The Catholic Directory of India, Burma and Ceylon", 1923).

Moreover the hierarchical organization of those Churches is demanded by the members of the clergy, because it seems to them that the creation of a metropolitan will serve to unite them with a straighter bond, in such way that they "could, through concerted forces, act more validly for the protection of their religious and civil rights at the governments which, also there, introduce a lot of things opposed to the Christian education of the youth, to the

holiness of marriage, etc". See petition of the priests of Ernakulam (Sum., no. 9, Encl. no. 2).

Then Msgr. Pisani says that the concession of hierarchy to the Syro-Malabarians will also serve to ennoble the Catholics before the Jacobites, who often reproach the Catholics as they are governed only by vicars apostolic, almost like (newly) converted infidels.

9. Therefore to the question whether it is fitting to comply with the insistent requests of the Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic for having the hierarchy, the Apostolic Delegates, Msgr. Zaleski (Delegate 1892-1916), Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi (Delegate 1916-1919), Msgr. Pietro Pisani (present Delegate), responded many times affirmatively.

*Msgr. Zaleski*, in a reply to the S. Congregation on 27 June 1922 reconfirming what he had already said in his reports of 1908-1909, adds: "I have never been able to understand the reason why it has been hesitated for such a long time to comply with this right and opportune request of the Suriani bishops. It is a thing that should have already been done 10 years ago. Of all the dioceses of India the abovementioned vicariates are those which come very close to the normal organization of the Church, with the clergy that differ very little from the European priests and numerous Christians of a little turbulent nature, but deeply Catholic. Therefore I do not hesitate to respond to the question: *Affirmative*" (see Sum., no. 13, 1). And in a subsequent official communication he adds: "It is not only suitable, but also necessary, right and opportune" (Sum., no. 14).

Lately *Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi*, while transmitting, from Washington, a copy of a letter on this subject, addressed to him by the vicars apostolic of Kottayam and Ernakulam, again wrote: "The four Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic, Msgr. Vazhapilly of Trichur, Msgr. Kandathil of Ernakulam, Msgr. Kurialacherry of Changanacherry and Msgr. Chulaparambil of Kottayam, have insistently asked for some years that (residential) bishops be appointed and that one among them be an archbishop. The vicar apostolic of Kottayam desires to be immediately subjected to the

Holy See and not to the future archbishop. Hence for now there would be an archbishop with two suffragan bishops and the other one immediately subjected. If I should say my opinion as the former Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies, it seems to me that *their desire is completely legitimate*. The present vicars apostolic are zealous, capable and animated with the best intentions. Above all Msgr. Augustine Kandathil of Ernakulam, ex alumnus of the seminary of Kandy, formed in the school of tribulation during the years when he was coadjutor of Msgr. Pareparambil, is a very learned, zealous and pious man”.

The present Delegate, *Msgr. P. Pisani*, while sending other new insisting letters of the vicars apostolic to the S. Congregation, has recommended them many times and still recently, with statistical data collected from the four vicariates, has compiled a table, which is enclosed in the Summary and from which Your Most Reverend Eminences can understand the progress made by Catholicism among the Surianis from the time of the concession of the bishops of the rite, namely from 1896 to 1921. Such statistics is a valid recommendation for the invoked creation of dioceses (Sum., nos. 2-6).

10. However, as regards the designation of the *metropolitan see*, the opinions are not anymore so concordant. The present Apostolic Delegate, as already did Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi, proposes *Changanacherry* because this is the most important vicariate, for the number of faithful (only in the city more than 10.000), number of clergy (254 priests, 104 seminarians), educational institutions, as well as for social and charitable works (see Sum., nos. 11-12; letters of Msgr. Fumasoni and Msgr. Pisani).

Instead Msgr. Zaleski, in the vote which he was pleased to compile about the hierarchy to be erected (Sum., no. 13), says that “*Ernakulam* (imposes itself) finds favour as the metropolitan see, because it is a city of great future and it will become one of the main harbours in the Indies, and that today it can already be said the main town, the metropolis of Malabar”.

Ernakulam, the capital of the small kingdom of Cochin, is certainly the most important town of Malabar for the central position and for very good communications; if then the English succeed in realizing the project of the new harbour, undoubtedly it will be one of the most important cities in India.

It is to be noted that the vicariate apostolic of Ernakulam has also some parishes in the kingdom of Travancore.

Msgr. Fumasoni has made the objection (Sum., no. 11) that in Ernakulam at a few meters of distance from the residence of the vicar apostolic there is the seat of the Latin archbishop of Verapoly,<sup>5</sup> with more than 4.000 Latin Catholics in the city, and therefore in his opinion it would not seem fitting that in the same city there is also the Suriani archbishop. To this objection others could answer that rather such a fact can be a favourable reason for the trust, and the good agreement that is fitting to be maintained between Latins and Surianis living together on the same territory. Moreover it is beyond doubt that in any case all the Surianis, and not only those of Ernakulam, would insist that their bishop, in such an important centre, is not inferior in dignity to the Latin archbishop.

11. It has not been considered opportune to ask the opinion of the vicars apostolic with regard to the designation of the metropolitan see because it is presumed that they would not have added relevant information in addition to that given by the three Apostolic Delegates and because, given the nature of Surianis, it has been thought to be prudent not to make requests which could arouse the too easy local emulations and to bring more confusion than light to the question. All the more so because, apart from the insistences of the Southist vicar apostolic of Kottayam, about whom it is going to be said, the other vicars apostolic have fully submitted themselves for this matter to the judgment of the S. Congregation [see on the subject the advice of Msgr. Zaleski

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<sup>5</sup> [From the time of the vicariate of Malabar in 1659 the seat of the ecclesiastical unit was in the island of Verapoly. In 1904 Archbishop Felipe Arginzonis y Astobiza OCD (1897-1918) transferred the seat and headquarters to the city of Ernakulam with permission from Rome].



(Sum., no. 14, 3) and see the petition of the priests of Changanacherry (Sum., no.9, Encl. 1].

Therefore it seems that, about the metropolitan see, the problem consists in deciding whether *Ernakulam* is to be preferred in view of the greater importance this city already now enjoys from the civil point of view and in all probability it is going to acquire rapidly and very soon or *Changanacherry* is preferable, a sufficiently important and rich city, although not big and of little easy communications, which is however now the seat of the most numerous vicariate apostolic as regards the faithful, and much more endowed with Catholic institutions.

12. Therefore if Your Eminences think it suitable, as it seems, not only to erect the present vicariates into residential sees, but also to immediately appoint an archbishop of the rite, in this case it will also be necessary to decide what position is to be given to the Southist vicariate apostolic of Kottayam: whether to number it among the suffragan sees or to make it a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See.

Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil, with numerous letters sometimes addressed to the Apostolic Delegate, sometimes to the S. Congregation, sometimes to the former Delegate Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi, and also directly to the Holy Father (last year during his *ad limina* visit on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress), has insistently supplicated and supplicates that in the eventual erection of the Syro-Malabar hierarchy the Southist vicariate be made a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See. Rather he would wish that the vicariate of Kottayam be erected as a separate metropolitan see without suffragans or at least that its bishop be appointed titular archbishop.

In support of his insistent petitions, Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil brings those same reasons which were taken into consideration by the Most Eminent Cardinals in 1911 for erecting a separate vicariate for the Southists.

All these reasons can be summarised in one: the clear-cut separation, or else rivalry existing for centuries between the two castes or nationalities, between the Northists (more than 450.000)

and the Southists (at the most 35.000) for which, each group would badly tolerate to be subjected to a bishop of the other nationality. See (Sum., no. 16) the letter sent by the three vicariates apostolic in 1911 and now enclosed by the Southist vicar apostolic in support of his request.

13. However here it has to be noted that the reasons, for which the Northists disdain to be subjected to a Southist bishop, have not perhaps of equal value when the contrary happens, that is the dependence of the Southists on a Northist; according to the testimony of the Apostolic Delegates it is an accepted and pacified custom in Malabar that the Northists fill civil offices with authority also on the Southists, while it seems that the contrary is not equally tolerated.

The reason for such difference can well be the incomparably greater number of the Northists and the idea that this nationality (or caste) is superior to the other.

A completely special situation of discontent and hostility was verified in the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry before 1911 since a Southist vicar apostolic was appointed there (Msgr. Makil of blessed memory, who – as it seems – sharpened the reasons of such discontent a little personally also, taking a little too much care of the interests of his nationality). The Most Eminent Cardinals thought it opportune to remedy this state of things in a radical way, erecting a special vicariate for the Southists and transferring Msgr. Makil to it. Such a situation does not really seem to be repeated when it is, as at present, only a question of the dependence of the Southist bishop on a Northist metropolitan.

Therefore it seems that the reasons and the special situation of-fact taken into consideration by the Most Eminent Cardinals in 1911 cannot be invoked now with perfect logic by the Most Reverend Msgr. Chulaparambil in support of his insistent petition.

14. Therefore Msgr. Pisani does not support the request of Msgr. Chulaparambil and in the letter enclosed in the Summary (no. 9) the Delegate expresses himself like this: “The reasons put forward in its favour do not persuade me. It seems to me that the dependence on the Metropolitan directly concerns the suffragan

bishop, not the clergy and the faithful; and to satisfy the legitimate feeling of independence from the Northists it would be enough the concession of a vicariate apostolic and the possible erection of the same as a diocese, without thinking to introduce in Malabar two archdioceses when every decision about the opportunity to have one of them is still postponed". And in another letter of his (Sum., no. 12): "the union of Kottayam to a metropolitan common to the other Suriani vicariates apostolic, even if in very rare cases (for example, an appeal to the superior ecclesiastical tribunal) could involve a certain dependence of the interested (Southists) on a Northist Ordinary, however does not seem to signify any diminution of the Southist self-respect, as Msgr. Chulaparambil would like to think".

Therefore it is not possible to comprehend why the Most Reverend Msgr. Chulaparambil can affirm in one of his letters that, for such dependence, "the Southists will not be happy under a Northist archbishop" (Prot. No. 10232).

15. The Most Reverend Msgr. Zaleski was in his days contrary to the concession of a bishop with personal jurisdiction for the 30.000 Southists resident for the most part in the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry, because he considered such concession as a dangerous recognition of caste in those regions. Now in his vote (Sum., no. 13, 3) he judges that the request to make the small vicariate of Kottayam a diocese not subjected to the common metropolitan should not be complied with. "There are two alternatives: either to subject the diocese of Kottayam to the metropolitan see, thus effecting only one ecclesiastical province of all the Surianis, something that would be desirable; or to directly subject the diocese of Kottayam to the Holy See, something hardly desirable auspicious, because it would be like a new approval of the exclusivity of the caste and it would accentuate the danger with which the Holy See will have to deal with at sometime and which can lead to the destruction of the most beautiful Catholic communities in India", and so (see Sum., no. 14, 5).

16. Instead Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi seems to be in favour of leaving the Southist diocese of Kottayam immediately subjected to the Holy See. Last year in one of his letters, while transmitting to

the S. Congregation one of the insinuations of Msgr. Chulaparambil, he said: "the idea that the diocese of Kottayam to be erected, be declared immediately subjected to the Holy See, smiles on me. This for the deplorable fact that Northists and Southists do not associate with, do not get married between them, they do not eat together and they quarrel about the precedence.<sup>6</sup> Then as regards making Kottayam an archiepiscopal see without suffragans, I would accept the request if the number of the Southist Catholics, through the conversion of the Southist Jacobites, would increase at least to 100.000, while now this vicariate is the smallest, numbering 30.000 faithful, whereas each of the others count not less than 100.000 faithful" (Sum., no. 18).

17. Then on 28 October 1922 Msgr. Fumasoni communicated to this S. Congregation that in the Papal Audience of 23 October the Holy Father had asked him for information about a letter left by Msgr. Chulaparambil in the hands of His Holiness (in which it was just asked that in erecting the Syro-Malabar hierarchy, the see of Kottayam be created immediately subjected and made metropolitan see without suffragans or that at least its bishop be appointed titular archbishop). As reported, after having benignly listened to the reasons exposed to him by Msgr. Fumasoni, the Holy Father manifested (the idea) "that when the hierarchy among the Syro-Malabarians will be founded, the project to create the vicariate apostolic of Kottayam for the Southists as a *diocese* immediately subjected to the Holy See smiled on him, nevertheless remitting to other times the erection of the said vicariate as an *archdiocese* immediately subjected" (Sum., no. 20).

18. If the abovementioned reasons seem enough to Your Most Reverend Eminences not to put the Southist diocese under the dependence of a Northist metropolitan and, on the other hand, if they do not judge fitting to give a position of privilege to this small diocese that, according to what Msgr. Pisani says (Sum., no. 12), perhaps "would result in a symbol of even greater divisions and animosities between Northists and Southists", it seems that there would not remain any way other than that of erecting these four

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<sup>6</sup> This is not for hate or aversion, but for immemorial custom.

vicariates apostolic into residential sees, leaving all of them, for now, under the immediate dependence of the Holy See.

However, such a measure is not suggested by any of the Apostolic Delegates, rather Msgr. Zaleski expressly disapproves it. It is necessary, he says, that "nothing of extraordinary be done, for example, four dioceses immediately subjected to the Holy See. It is necessary to proceed as the Church usually does in such a case. That is to create an ecclesiastical province with a metropolitan" (Sum., no. 14, 2).

Elsewhere the same Monsignor affirms that, for a greater prestige of the Holy See in Malabar, while erecting those vicariates into dioceses, it is fitting to immediately assign a metropolitan, so that finally the Syro-Malabarians have the much invoked hierarchy. Such a judgment is also shared by the Most Reverend Msgr. Pisani.

Therefore if Your Eminences consider it opportune to appoint the archbishop for sure, it seems that many difficulties raised by Msgr. Chulaparambil would disappear if the city of Ernakulam were chosen as the metropolitan see.

In fact it seems that the Southist bishop has a special reluctance to become suffragan of the bishop of Changanacherry perhaps because in the past there was some difference between them, explicable after all with the fact that these two bishops exercise personal jurisdiction on the same territory where the administration of the Southist parishes and churches is separate from that of the Northists.

19. Having been created the dioceses, with regular dependence on a metropolitan, what the S. Congregation has recommended since 1909, can also be obtained more easily, namely the Suriani bishops "regularly assemble and compile the scheme of a synod which, then approved by the Holy See, clearly constitutes the customary law of the Suriani Church".

This will undoubtedly be a great step for the progress of those Christian communities whose situation, in comparison with the other dioceses of India, is already now so comforting.

After this, to Your Most Reverend Eminences are proposed the following DOUBTS:

1) Whether it is fitting to erect the Syro-Malabar vicariates apostolic into residential sees.

If affirmative: 2) Whether it is fitting to leave all of them immediately subjected to the Holy See.

If negative: 3) Whether and which of the dioceses to be erected, is fitting to be chosen as metropolitan see.

If affirmative: 4) Whether it is fitting to declare the Southist diocese of Kottayam immediately subjected to the Holy See.

5) Whether and what other provisions are fitting to be adopted.

## 2. Summary (Documents Attached to the Report)

The 22 documents attached to the Report are not arranged according to the chronological order, but more or less according to the themes treated: the opportunity of erecting Syro-Malabar hierarchy, the choice of metropolitan see and the special status requested for the Southist vicariate of Kottayam. We present the documents as they are found in the original Summary given to the members of the plenary assembly of the Oriental Congregation.

### 2.1. Comparative Statistical Table of the Dioceses in South India (Sum. No. I)

*This is a comparative statistical table of the dioceses of South India and the Syro-Malabar vicariates apostolic, taken from "The Catholic Directory of India, Burma and Ceylon". This statistics demonstrates that, despite the lack of a stable hierarchical organization and genuine ecclesiastical structure, the Syro-Malabar vicariates were better than many of the Latin dioceses in South India, with regard to the number of Christian faithful and indigenous priests.*

| Dioceses and vicariates apostolic | Catholics | Percentage | Indigenous priests | European priests |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <b><i>Syro-Malabar</i></b>        |           |            |                    |                  |
| Changanacherry, vic. ap.          | 159,024   | 29         | 258                |                  |
| Trichur »                         | 128,605   | 16         | 68                 |                  |
| Ernakulam »                       | 113,936   | 17         | 141                |                  |
| Kottayam »                        | 34,894    | 18         | 30                 |                  |
| <b><i>Latin</i></b>               |           |            |                    |                  |
| Verapoly, archdiocese             | 98,467    | 25         | 50                 | 26               |
| Quilon, diocese                   | 108,711   | 9          | 60                 | 12               |
| Cochin »                          | 150,989   | 26         | 56                 | 23               |

|                      |          |    |     |     |
|----------------------|----------|----|-----|-----|
| Trichinopoly »       | 278,429  | 9  | 60  | 124 |
| Coimbatore »         | 44,014   | 13 | 23  | 32  |
| Mangalore »          | 112,000  | 17 | 77  | 37  |
| Mysore »             | 56,589   | 12 | 20  | 47  |
| Madras               | 58,246   | 9  | 22  | 43  |
| Pondicherry »        | 147,710  | 3  | 27  | 68  |
| Kumbakonam »         | 103,873  | 8  | 14  | 35  |
| Mylapore »           | 82,879   | 14 | 57  | 20  |
| Goa,<br>Patriarchate | 325, 370 | 3  | 783 | 12  |

## 2.2. Statistical Table of the Four Vicariates Sent by Apostolic Delegate Pisani (Sum. No. II)

*With the letter of 5 July 1922 the Oriental Congregation asked the Apostolic Delegate Msgr. Pietro Pisani to obtain a statistics of the progress made by Catholicism in the four vicariates since the time of their creation. Complying with this directive the Apostolic Delegate asked the four vicars apostolic to submit the statistics of the respective vicariate, and all of them did so. On the basis of the data obtained the Apostolic Delegate himself compiled a statistical table demonstrating the great progress made by Catholicism in the aforementioned vicariates and forwarded it to the Oriental Congregation. First we present the statistical table of the Apostolic Delegate and then the data presented by each of the four vicars apostolic.*

20 September 1922

Most Reverend Eminence,

With reference to the venerable letter of the S. Congregation on 5 July 1922, No. 8197 I have the honour to submit to Your Most Reverend Eminence the report of the most reverend vicars apostolic of Malabar about the progress made by Catholicism in those regions after the erection of the vicariates.

In order to facilitate reading and to coordinate the results I have thought it well to prepare the enclosed statistical table,



necessarily incomplete for want of elements, but sufficient in my opinion.

Bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, I have the honour to profess myself with deep veneration, of Your Most Reverend Eminence,

Most humble and most devout servant,

✠ P. Pisani, Archbishop of Costantia, Apostolic Delegate in the East Indies.

Statistical Table

| Dioceses       | Years   | Churches, chapels... | Priests | Faithful | Seminarians | Seminaries | Catechumens | New converts | Carmelite Religious | Monasteries | Sisters |
|----------------|---------|----------------------|---------|----------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------|---------|
| Changanacherry | 1896    | 104                  | 200     | 92. 638  | 54          | 1          | 2           | 130          | 34                  | 4           | 19      |
|                | 1906    | 130                  | 214     | 109. 843 | 60          | 1          | 3           | 400          | 44                  | 4           | 60      |
|                | 1916    | 137                  | 242     | 130. 500 | 80          | 1          | 15          | 1. 625       | 91                  | 4           | 172     |
|                | 1921-22 | 182                  | 254     | 159. 000 | 104         | 1          | 18          | 15. 706      | 116                 | 5           | 438     |
| Ernakulam      | 1896    | 74                   | 114     | 75. 200  | 17          | 0          | 0           | 200          | 25                  | 3           | 60      |
|                | 1906    | 104                  | 115     | 90. 336  | 39          | 1          | 1           | 3. 000       | 27                  | 4           | 97      |
|                | 1916    | 144                  | 125     | 107. 490 | 48          | 1          | 3           | 4. 000       | 41                  | 4           | 151     |
|                | 1921-22 | 151                  | 143     | 113. 936 | 47          | 1          | 14          | 4. 479       | 57                  | 4           | 199     |
| Kottayam       | 1896    | -                    | -       | -        | -           | -          | -           | -            | -                   | -           | -       |
|                | 1906    | -                    | -       | -        | -           | -          | -           | -            | -                   | -           | -       |
|                | 1916    | 40                   | 36      | 32. 000  | 14          | 1          | 2           | 78(sic)      | -                   | 0           | 31      |
|                | 1921-22 | 44                   | 43      | 35. 000  | 16          | 1          | 6           | 145          | -                   | 1           | 43      |
| Trichur        | 1896    | 82                   | 92      | 70. 472  | 19          | 0          | 1           | -            | 24                  | 2           | 12      |
|                | 1906    | 91                   | 93      | 97. 620  | 33          | 1          | 2           | -            | 36                  | 3           | 140     |
|                | 1916    | 100                  | 95      | 118. 768 | 47          | 1          | 4           | -            | 48                  | 3           | 290     |
|                | 1921-22 | 104                  | 96      | 130. 193 | 57          | 1          | 5           | 205          | 58                  | 3           | 303     |

| Dioceses       | Years   | Convents | Printing Press | Journals | Orphanages | Orphans | Colleges | High schools | Inferior schools | Students | Boardings |
|----------------|---------|----------|----------------|----------|------------|---------|----------|--------------|------------------|----------|-----------|
| Changanacherry | 1896    | 2        | 1              | 2        | —          | —       | 0        | 1            | 7                | 439      | —         |
|                | 1906    | 6        | 1              | 2        | —          | —       | 0        | 3            | 11               | 1.260    | —         |
|                | 1916    | 7        | 2              | 3        | —          | —       | 0        | 3            | 39               | 4.915    | —         |
|                | 1921-22 | 23       | 5              | 4        | —          | —       | 1        | 5            | 81               | 8.815    | —         |
| Ernakulam      | 1896    | 3        | 0              | 0        | 0          | 0       | 0        | 0            | 102              | 4.290    | 1         |
|                | 1906    | 5        | 1              | 0        | 1          | 17      | 0        | 0            | 184              | 10.390   | 4         |
|                | 1916    | 7        | 2              | 0        | 1          | 15      | 0        | 1            | 157              | 15.373   | 7         |
|                | 1921-22 | 9        | 3              | 1        | 3          | 24      | 0        | 1            | 225              | 18.303   | 11        |
| Kottayam       | 1896    | —        | —              | —        | —          | —       | —        | —            | —                | —        | —         |
|                | 1906    | —        | —              | —        | —          | —       | —        | —            | —                | —        | —         |
|                | 1916    | 3        | 0              | —        | 1          | —       | 0        | 0            | 6                | 2.170    | 3         |
|                | 1921-22 | 5        | 1              | —        | 1          | —       | 0        | 0            | 24               | 2.484    | 5         |
| Trichur        | 1896    | 1        | 0              | —        | 0          | —       | 0        | 1            | 154              | 8.885    | —         |
|                | 1906    | 4        | 0              | —        | 0          | —       | 0        | 3            | 194              | 15.945   | —         |
|                | 1916    | 7        | 0              | —        | 1          | —       | 0        | 3            | 204              | 23.055   | —         |
|                | 1921-22 | 9        | 0              | —        | 2          | —       | 1        | 3            | 254              | 24.625   | —         |

## Observations

The number of conversions represents the total that took place in the years elapsed from that marked in the superior line, to which the figure refers to.

Thus for Changanacherry the figure of 15,706 conversions marked for the year 1921-22 represents the number of conversions happened since 1916 to 30 June 1922, that is during six years.

In such figures the conversions from Paganism, Protestantism and from the schism are included.

The vicar apostolic of Trichur does not give the number of conversions. For the year 1921 *The Catholic Directory* records a total of 205.

**Note:** the statistics of *The Catholic Directory of India* about the number of the Syro-Malabar Catholics in every vicariate, for Changanacherry and Ernakulam agrees with the above-exposed table, while for Trichur it gives only the No. 106433 and for Kottayam it does not bring figures.

### 2.3. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Changanacherry (Sum. No. III)

*The statistics furnished by Mar Thomas Kurialacherry to Apostolic Delegate Pisani was the most comprehensive of that of all other Syro-Malabar vicariates. The table demonstrates that at that time the vicariate of Changanacherry was in the first place with regard to religious life, number of Christian faithful and priests, evangelization and conversions, religious life and convents, as well as cultural and educational institutions.*

Vicariate Apostolic of Changanacherry, 29 August 1922

Most Excellent Lord,

As regards the information, sought through your Excellency's letter No. 2503 about the progress of this vicariate under the government of Syro-Malabar prelates, I humbly submit the following.

In the last year of the episcopate of the most Rev. Lord Bishop Charles Lavigne SJ, this vicariate embraced both Ernakulam and Kottayam. However, under the episcopate of the most Rev. Lord Mathew Makil, who governed this vicariate from 1896 until the year 1911, although Ernakulam was excluded, it included Kottayam. In fact, the list presented demonstrates things as they were and they are in the present territory of this vicariate, excluding the things of the vicariates of Ernakulam and Kottayam which actually remained united until the year 1896, apart from the Kottayam vicariate that was united to this until 1911 (the last year of the episcopate of the most Rev. Lord Bishop Mathew Makil).

Three kinds of statistics are submitted here: namely, 1. Condition of religious affairs, 2. Condition of secular education, 3. Condition of economic affairs.

|                               | Items                              | 1896  | 1906   | 1916   | 1921-22 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| <b>I. Religious condition</b> |                                    |       |        |        |         |
| 1.                            | Churches and chapels               | 104   | 130    | 137    | 182     |
| 2.                            | Priests                            | 200   | 214    | 242    | 254     |
| 3.                            | Faithful                           | 92638 | 109843 | 130500 | 159000  |
| 4.                            | Seminarians                        | 54    | 60     | 80     | 104     |
| 5.                            | Seminary (Minor)                   | 1     | 1      | 1      | 1       |
| 6.                            | Catechumenates                     | 2     | 3      | 15     | 18      |
| 7.                            | New-converts                       | 130   | 400    | 1625   | 15706   |
| 8.                            | Carmelite religious with aspirants | 34    | 44     | 91     | 116     |
|                               | Their monasteries                  | 4     | 4      | 4      | 5       |
| 9.                            | Carmelite sisters                  | 12    | 41     | 77     | 153     |
|                               | Their houses                       | 1     | 3      | 3      | 9       |
| 10.                           | Clarist sisters                    | 7     | 19     | 75     | 142     |
|                               | Their houses                       | 1     | 3      | 4      | 7       |
| 11.                           | Adoration sisters                  | 0     | 0      | 20     | 143     |
|                               | Their houses                       | 0     | 0      | 1      | 7       |
| 12.                           | Catholic press                     | 1     | 1      | 2      | 5       |
|                               | Journals                           | 2     | 2      | 3      | 4       |

**II. Educational condition**

|    |   |     |     |      |      |
|----|---|-----|-----|------|------|
| 1. | Academic college                            | 0   | 0   | 0    | 1    |
|    | Graduates (men)                             | 2   | 15  | 45   | 150  |
|    | Graduates (women)                           | 0   | 0   | 3    | 15   |
|    | Catholic students                           | 5   | 25  | 140  | 315  |
|    | Catholic girls in colleges                  | 0   | 0   | 15   | 45   |
| 2. | Engl. High. School for boys                 | 1   | 3   | 3    | 4    |
|    | » » » for girls                             | 0   | 0   | 0    | 1    |
|    | Catholic boys in H. Schools                 | 15  | 180 | 300  | 525  |
|    | Catholic girls » »                          | 0   | 10  | 50   | 85   |
| 3. | Eng. lower. sch. for boys                   | 2   | 3   | 5    | 8    |
|    | » » » for girls                             | 0   | 1   | 1    | 3    |
|    | Catholic boys in Eng. Low                   | 95  | 350 | 1100 | 2850 |
|    | Catholic girls » »                          | 4   | 20  | 120  | 350  |
| 4. | Vernac. schol. recognized by Gov. for boys  | 4   | 4   | 25   | 55   |
|    | Vernac. schol. recognized by Gov. for girls | 1   | 3   | 8    | 15   |
|    | Catholic boys in vernac. Schools            | 250 | 550 | 2580 | 4225 |
|    | Catholic girls » »                          | 75  | 200 | 765  | 3580 |
| 5. | Illiterate faithful                         | 10% | 8%  | 5%   | 4.5% |

**III. Economic condition**

|    |                                      |      |      |       |        |
|----|--------------------------------------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1. | Mission fund, value, Rs.             | 5000 | 5000 | 75000 | 185000 |
| 2. | Crop fund, value, Rs.                | 150  | 150  | 2500  | 5550   |
| 3. | Contribution of 5% from pastors, Rs. | 3500 | 3500 | 5500  | 8500   |
| 4. | Donations from pastors, Rs.          | Nil  | Nil  | 18847 | 8325   |

|    | Expenses for:                  |             |             |       |       |
|----|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 1. | Maintenance of the Curia, etc. | Unkn<br>own | Unkno<br>wn | 5500  | 5600  |
| 2. | Education and buildings        | »           | »           | 9170  | 19250 |
| 3. | Propagation of faith           | »           | »           | 4280  | 6650  |
| 4. | Purchase of properties         | »           | »           | 21341 | 10974 |
| 5. | Cultural fund                  | »           | »           | 2645  | 3597  |
| 6. | Donation, etc.                 | »           | »           | 1899  | 2110  |

Bishop's House, Changanacherry, 29 August 1922.

✕ Thomas Kurialacherry, Bishop Vicar Apostolic of Changanacherry.

## 2.4. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Ernakulam since 1897 (Sum. No. IV)

*The vicariate of Ernakulam was formed in 1896 dismembering the deaneries of Edappally, Arakuzha and Pallippuram, along with the Southist churches of Chumkam, Caringott and Brahmamangalam from the vicariate of Changanacherry, and separating the churches located in the Southern part of the river Chalakudy from the vicariate of Trichur. Aloysius Pareparambil was appointed the first vicar apostolic of Ernakulam on 11 August 1896. When the vicariate of Kottayam was formed in 1911 the aforementioned three Southist Churches were dismembered and added to the new vicariate. After the death of the first vicar apostolic on 8 December 1919, Augustine Kandathil, who was titular bishop of Arad and coadjutor vicar apostolic from 29 August 1911 succeeded him and officially began his ministry on 9 December 1919. The statistics offered by Kandathil reveals that after its erection this vicariate made rapid progress in all aspects of Christian life and socio-cultural, educational and human development. The document also contains some notes and explanations which are also helpful to comprehend the real situation of the vicariate at that time.*

| Year                           | 1897(a) | 1901   | 1911      | January 1920(e) | 1921-22    |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------|-----------|-----------------|------------|
| 1. Catholic homes              | 14,000  | 16,000 | 19,144    | 21,707          | (k)21,707  |
| 2. Catholics                   | 75,000  | 83,964 | (c)99,434 | 113,936         | (l)113,936 |
| 3. Parrochial churches         | 61      | 79     | 90(c)     | (f)94           | 98         |
| 4. Chapels                     | 0       | 5      | 19        | 5               | 5          |
| 5. Oratories                   | 13      | 13     | 13        | 45              | 48         |
| 6. Secular priests             | 114     | 117    | 111       | (g)138          | 143        |
| 7. Alumni in theol. Seminaries | 17      | 23     | 44        | 30              | (m)31      |



|                                      |                                     |       |        |        |        |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| 8.Minor seminary                     | 0                                   | (b)1  | 1      | 1      | 1      |
| 9. Alumni in minor seminaries        | 0                                   | 2     | 10     | 12     | (n)16  |
| 10. English high schools             | 0                                   | 0     | 1      | 1(h)   | 1      |
| 11. Lower English schools            | 0                                   | 0     | (d)2   | 6      | 10     |
| 12.Vernacular high schools           | 0                                   | 0     | 1      | 4      | 5      |
| 13. Lower vernacular schools         | 102                                 | 159   | 198    | (i)144 | (p)215 |
| 14. Alumni in schools                | 4,200                               | 7,694 | 11,096 | 12,542 | 18,303 |
| 15. Boarding for Cath. Alumni        | 1                                   | 3     | 7      | 10     | 11     |
| 16. Inmates                          | 28                                  | 73    | 271    | 268    | 280    |
| 17.Orphanages                        | 0                                   | 0     | 1      | 1      | 3(q)   |
| 18. Orphans                          | 0                                   | 0     | 17     | 10     | 24(r)  |
| 19.Monasteries                       | 3                                   | 4     | 4      | 4      | 4      |
| 20. Religious (priests and brothers) | 25                                  | 25    | 29     | 52     | 57     |
| 21. Convents of women religious      | 3                                   | 4     | 6      | 9      | 9      |
| 22. Religious sisters                | 60                                  | 90    | 116    | 179    | 199    |
| 23.Conversions                       | (between 200 and 300 each year) (j) |       |        | (s)479 | (t)-   |
| 24. Catechu-menates                  | 0                                   | 1     | 2      | 4      | 14     |
| 25. Catholic press                   | 0                                   | 0     | 2      | 2      | (u)3   |

## Notes

a) When the most illustrious and the most Rev. Lord Aloysius Pareparambil, the first vicar apostolic took canonical possession of this vicariate apostolic on 5 November 1896, even he did not have a house to live.

b) The minor seminary, dedicated (consecrated) to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was erected on the 3 July 1901, and it seems, it is the first one of this kind in the whole of Malabar.

c) Indicates the number of Catholics and churches, excluding about 2000 Southists who, together with three Southist churches, were handed over to the newly erected vicariate apostolic of Kottayam.

d) Due to the new regulation of the government of Travancore, harmful to Catholic schools, some native English and vernacular schools already existing then in this vicariate could not be utilized and new ones could not be founded.

e) On 9 December 1919 the most illustrious and most Rev. Lord Aloysius Pareparambil departed from this life.

f) Most of the churches are built with the collections made among the faithful who, although are not rich and the majority are poor, in various ways make contributions to their churches and schools; the workers, however, contribute only their labour to the same purpose.

g) Now among the priests there are some who have obtained civil and ecclesiastical academic degrees.

h) When the most Rev. Lord Aloysius Pareparambil took charge of the vicariate, although there were among the heretics, those who obtained academic degrees, there was not even a single such person among the Catholics; in fact there were only a very few who knew the English language. But now, there are many who have been adorned with the highest academic degrees called M. A., B. A., B. L. etc., in such a way that all the Catholic advocates in Ernakulam itself – which is the capital of the kingdom of Cochin and in which is situated the supreme tribunals of the government – are Syro-Malabarians, one of whom is a “Barrister” who was

chosen to exercise the office of the one supreme judge for a certain period of time. Now also among the men and women religious, there are some who have been elevated to academic degrees.

i) The cause of the decrease of schools has been indicated above in note (d).

j) It is not possible to refer to the exact number of converts, since the statistics of the first years is not found. Therefore the number noted here is the middle (average), as far as it could be explored. At the end of the year 1920 the number of converts was 479 as it is noted in the report given for that year.

k) New statistics has not been made after the year 1920.

l) New statistics of Catholics has not been made after the year 1920.

m) Among the alumni of the major seminary some are adorned with academic degrees.

n) Now generally, only those who have had success in their studies in high school, are admitted to the diocesan seminary. Among the alumni of this seminary, in fact there are some who have gained the degree of B. A. (Hons.) B. A.

p) In any case it is asserted and urged that each village has its own Catholic school, this year some industrial schools have also been started.

q) Recently orphanages have also been founded, some for boys, others for girls.

r) The boys are under the care of brothers, while sisters take care of the girls.

s) The number of conversions in the year 1920 was 479, last year 799 persons were converted to the faith. All the reports of this year have not yet been received; a greater number is, however, expected.

t) About this it has already been said in note (s).

u) In the last year a diocesan press was instituted, which printed the "Orgnum", in which are promulgated the diocesan

laws, statutes and all other ecclesiastical matters necessary for the orderly life of the priests and the faithful.

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1. In 1920 the "Apostolic Union of Secular Priests" was erected and was affiliated to the primary Union of Paris. Now this Union has indeed 80 priests as members and it is ahead of the other associations of this kind in India.

2. A collection, "Provident fund" for the maintenance of the aged and sick priests was introduced last year and is now flourishing very much.

3. A Society for the propagation of the faith was founded last year and has already been extended to 70 parishes; clergy and people are especially striving for its diffusion and conversion.

4. At the time of its erection this vicariate was divided into 5 forane vicariates (deaneries), in each of which was appointed a forane vicar. However they did not make any supervision of the churches. Therefore, the office of visiting the churches once a year and the obligation of submitting the respective reports to the bishop were entrusted to them last year. Since they were not able to perform this function conveniently and perfectly, on account of the functions in their own churches and because of the increase in the number of parishes, last month the whole vicariate apostolic was divided into nine forane vicariates, and in each of which was appointed a forane vicar with greater faculties.

5. Catholic youth associations for carrying out various pious activities and for diffusing knowledge of Catholic matters are almost daily multiplied. Catholic newspapers are very much diffused among the Catholics.

6. There is scarcely a parish in which any confraternity has not been established. Devotion to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, and wearing her scapular in public, are considered as an honour and a sign with which generally the Catholics are distinguished from heretics.

7. One of the most praiseworthy and most important works accomplished by the most illustrious and most Rev. A. Pareparambil is with regard to the administration of ecclesiastical goods. He modified the custom among us in Malabar by his perseverance, although he had to bear many difficulties and oppositions; he brought about that in the vicariate in all the documents, valid before the Government the names of parish priests should be put in the first place, so that it may be clearly apparent to others also that, the principal person for the administration of ecclesiastical goods is the pastor, the prepared laity being only his assistants.

8. From the time, when my predecessor dedicated this vicariate apostolic to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, this salutary devotion has made much progress so that now there is scarcely a parish in which on the first Friday of the month very many faithful do not receive the Communion, and after exposing the Blessed Sacrament, do not adore for an hour. Frequent and daily Communion makes great progress.

Augustine Kandathil, Bishop of Arad, Vicar Apostolic of Ernakulam.

## 2.5. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Trichur (Sum. No.V)

*The vicariate of Trichur was one of the first vicariates erected on 20 May 1887 and it practically did not undergo any substantial territorial reorganization, although in 1896 it had to cede the territory between the rivers Chalakudy and Alwaye to the vicariate of Ernakulam. After the first Vicar Apostolic Adolf Edwin Medlycott (1887-1896 resigned), John Menacherry (1896-1919) and Francis Vazhappilly (1921-1942) governed the vicariate. The notes and statistics provided by the Vicar Apostolic Vazhappilly contains some details from the year 1887 on.*

*Year 1887.* The first vicar Lord Adolf Medlycott in the first place set up a minor seminary, with a school for higher studies annexed to it, and endeavoured to uproot the schism, initiated by Mellus and others, which had induced a number of churches to error.

*Year 1896.* The second, but the first Syrian vicar apostolic, Lord John Menachery, native of Malabar worked much against the schism and dedicated himself to education, especially of girls; of this fact the members of the government of Cochin itself are witnesses, who very often thanked Lord Menachery for this. During this administration, five schismatic churches returned, the mission for the conversion of Jacobites began, nine convents were instituted for the education of girls and finally in the last days the St Thomas school was raised to the status of a second grade college; according to (the grades of) colleges in the state of Cochin and the only one really of the Catholics in Malabar.<sup>21</sup>

*Year 1921.* The third Vicar Apostolic Lord Francis Vazhapilly really sees the good fruits of the administration of his most illustrious and most reverend predecessors, namely fruits of true knowledge, faith and morals. The faithful very much help the clergy endowed with learning, piety, zeal, and with the reception of the sacraments and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary they endeavour to make themselves strong soldiers of the Church among so many pagans. The schism, better the Nestorian heresy, still remains, although in a very weak state, under the leadership of a certain Abimelek, who nevertheless is only an administrator, and the Lord be praised, he acts prudently. In these days, pagans and non-Catholics demonstrate greater love and respect to his religion and sect and strive to defend and strengthen it; however those who better know, esteem the Catholic religion. Conversion work has better success among the pagans of lower grade, but among the pagans of higher grade very little. In the territory of the vicariate the media of communication are easier and very much help to foster cooperation.

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<sup>21</sup> N. B. In 1921 another college of the same grade was opened in Changanacherry. P. Pisani.

| Year            | 1890           | 1897                      | 1922   |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|--------|
| Churches        | 77             | 82                        | 104    |
| Priests         | 80             | 92                        | 96     |
| Catholics       | 74414          | 76472                     | 130193 |
| Monasteries     | 2              | 3                         | 3      |
| Major convents  | 1              | 1                         | 9      |
| Monks           | 50             | 24                        | 58     |
| Women religious | 16             | 12                        | 303    |
| Colleges        | —              | —                         | 1      |
| Schools         | 121<br>Major 1 | 154<br>Major 3            | 254    |
| Students        | 6303           | 8835                      | 24625  |
| Orphanages      | —              | —                         | —      |
| Catechumenates  | 1              | 1                         | 1      |
| Seminarians     | 24             | 19<br>Minor<br>seminary 1 | 57     |

Vicariate Apostolic of Trichur, 16 September 1922

✠ F. Vazhapilly, Vicar Apostolic of Trichur

## 2.6. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam (Sum. No. VI)

*Pope Pius X dismembered the Southist deaneries of Kottayam and Kaduthuruthy from the vicariate of Changanacherry and the Southist churches of Chumkam, Caringott and Brahmamangalam from the vicariate of Ernakulam, and constituted the vicariate of Kottayam on 29 August 1911. On 30 August 1911 Mar Mathew Makil was transferred from the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry and appointed as the vicar apostolic of Kottayam. After the death of Mar Makil on 26 January 1914, Alexander Chulaparambil was appointed titular bishop of Busiris and vicar apostolic on 16 July 1914, who governed the vicariate (diocese in 1923) until his death on 8 January 1951. The statistics furnished by the vicar apostolic attests to the progress made by this youngest*

*vicariate from 1911 to 1922. It is interesting to note that in this official statistics sent to the Holy See Chulaparambil stated that there were 13 conversions in 1911 and the number of converts increased to 145 in 1922. From this it is evident that even at his time converts were enrolled in the vicariate of Kottayam; perhaps the endogamous attitude of exclusion became rigid only at a later period.*

This present vicariate which, after the suppression, was restored in 1911 by the brief, "In Universi Christiani", includes 3 deaneries – Kottayam, Kaduthuruthy, Uzhavoor – and extends its jurisdiction to all the churches and chapels of the Southist Catholics of the Syro-Malabar rite (existing) on the Malabar coast.

The present vicar apostolic is the most illustrious and most Rev. Lord Alexander Chulaparambil, whose residence is in Kottayam.

|   | Year<br>1911 | Year<br>1922 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Catholics   | 29,000       | 35,000       |
| Churches and chapels                                  | 37           | 44           |
| Stations  | —            | 6            |
| Priests (all secular, native)                         | 29           | 43           |
| Seminary  | 1            | 1            |
| Seminarians   | 12           | 16           |
| <b>Religious Institutes</b>                           |              |              |
| For men   | —            | 1            |
| For women (Visitation)                                | 2            | 5            |
| Sisters   | 19           | 43           |
| Sisters in the hospital in Kottayam                   | —            | 5            |
| <b>Educational Institutions</b>                       |              |              |
| English schools for boys                              | 1            | 4            |
| English schools for girls (under the care of sisters) | —            | 1            |
| Alumni in them  | 81           | 447          |



|   |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| Elementary schools (vern. High. for girls)  | —     | 1     |
| Elementary schools, lower grade             | 5     | 18    |
| Parochial schools                           | 35    | 46    |
| Alumni in them                              | 1,875 | 2,484 |
| Boarding houses                             | 2     | 5     |
| Association for Catholic youth (C.Y.M.A.)   | —     | 1     |
| Conversion                                  | 13    | 145   |
| Asylum                                      | 1     | 1     |
| Printing press (under the care of mission)) | —     | 1     |

## 2.7. Differences between Northists and Southists (Sum. No. VII)

*This is an extract from the Report presented by Cardinal Anthony Agliardi in the general meeting of Propaganda Fide for the Affairs of the Oriental Rite on 31 July 1911 which decided for the erection of the Southist vicariate apostolic of Kottayam. The intention of this extract here is to explain the differences between the Northists and the Southists in the Syro-Malabar Church to the fathers of the plenary assembly. We have already published the complete text of this Report.<sup>22</sup>*

These two heterogeneous groups answer to the double name of Northists and Southists, a name that, as we shall see later on, does not reflect a correct division of castes in accordance with the known Indian concept and meaning, but refers to two different races or nationalities. Certainly between Northists and Southists there is also a distinction of social caste (aristocratic and popular), but it does not constitute the fundamental discrepancy or the characteristic note of the two parties; it rather reflects *per accidens* the different nationality of the two groups. The present distinction between Northists and Southists is not geographical, even though

<sup>22</sup> [P. Pallath & G. Kanjirakkatt, *Origin of the Southist Vicariat of Kottayam; Acts and Facts*, 155-174 & 276-293].

most of the Southists are geographically in the South of Malabar. In accordance with tradition, the Northists represent the so-called Christians of St Thomas and they descend from the Indians who embraced Christianity thanks to the Apostle, while the Southists descend from some emigrants from Mesopotamia and Persia who were led to Malabar by a certain Thomas Cana in 345. The origin of the two names derives from the fact that in ancient times the Northists occupied the northern part and the Southists inhabited the southern part of the town of Cranganore. However, later on these two groups infiltrated and dispersed here and there and now these names represent none other than the different origin from a national point of view. This subsequent infiltration and intermingling did not change the attitude of the two groups as regards their social, civil and religious relationships. The two classes have almost no contact: the Northists and the Southists do not marry each other, they do not attend the churches belonging to the other nationality, they do not want priests of the other race, etc. Naturally, as Christians they reject all the religious errors of India, they admit the unity of mankind, the dogma of creation, the dogma of redemption, the identity of origin and end in all humans, the universal brotherhood introduced by the Gospel and the other theoretical and practical doctrines taught by the Church, but they want to maintain their national type unaltered and therefore they live in a closed circle, imitating other populations who emigrated to India, such as the Jews, the Persians, etc.

## **2.8. Letter of Zaleski Requesting the Erection of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (Sum. No. VIII)**

*Apostolic Delegate Ladislao Zaleski was diametrically opposed to the appointment of native vicars apostolic in 1896 and predicted the complete destruction of Catholicism itself in India in case of the appointment of indigenous bishops. He did not even fulfil his obligation, as the apostolic delegate of East Indies, of presenting candidates to the Holy See for appointment as vicars apostolic, maintaining that no one among the native priests was worthy and capable of episcopate. He also maintained that it would be impossible to find worthy successors, if native bishops*

*had been appointed. However, after the appointment of three native vicars apostolic in 1896, seeing the great progress made by the Syro-Malabar Church under the able leadership of autochthonous bishops, Zaleski had to change his mind and already in 1907-1908 he sent letters to the Holy See recommending the constitution of a stable hierarchy for the Syro-Malabar Church. In the letter which we reproduce here he did not even hesitate to indicate that it was an injustice of the Holy See to keep these vicariates with so many Catholics in such an unstable state, while the recent Latin missions with much less number of Christian faithful and priests are all dioceses.*

Mangalore, 5 December 1908

Most Reverend Eminence,

Being in Rome last winter I had the honour to present to Your Most Reverend Eminence a report about the opportunity to elevate the three vicariates apostolic of Malabar to the rank of dioceses and the vicars to that of residential bishops, forming an ecclesiastical province with the metropolis in *Ernakulam*.

I beg Your Most Reverend Eminence to deign to reassume this report of mine. Now I have stayed in Malabar for two months, most of this time among the Surianis and I have fully been persuaded not only of the opportunity but also of the necessity of this measure.

Certainly, it was a wise and prudent provision to begin with the erection of vicariates apostolic, but now during twelve years these Indian bishops have proved to be capable of governing and now (something afraid of in the beginning) in case of the death of one of them it will not be difficult to find successors. Hence I do not find any reason to keep these Surianis in a state that they consider of inferiority, and the Indian bishops in a state of inferiority in comparison with the European bishops.<sup>23</sup>

Certainly, these three Suriani vicariates have the first rank among the dioceses of the Delegation.

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<sup>23</sup> [At that time all the Latin bishops in India were Europeans].

As regards the number of Catholics, they are exceeded only by the dioceses of Goa, Trichinopoly and Colombo and then they surpass these last two a lot in the parish organization.

All the three vicariates are divided into real parishes. There are no benefices, but the parishes are provided with funds enough for the maintenance of priests. In fact the bishops do not permit that a new church be built, nor that it is erected into a parish if first it has not been provided with means at least modestly.

Then many parish churches would make a better impression than some of the cities in Europe, the others are decent and generally well-provided with vestments and vessels.

The bishops are capable prelates and certainly I do not consider them as the last ones in the Episcopate of the Delegation.

As regards the affairs, one treats with them absolutely as with the European bishops, and also in the social relationships there is no difference.

They administer the vicariates in a way rather different from that with which we would have administered them. However, even an American bishop governs his diocese in a different way from that of a French bishop, and in order to be able to judge, it is necessary to look at the results. Now the Suriani Church, which is governed by native bishops for twelve years, has certainly made progress and – I would also say – not little progress.

The younger clergy are not to be despised. The Suriani clergy differ little from the clergy of the dioceses of Europe and certainly it is superior to the clergy of Mangalore, which enjoys a good reputation in India, and even among the old ones, among those who are here called of the Old Testament and who have done only derisive studies, there are very venerable persons.

However, it is in the young clergy that the progress is seen. I do not speak of the studies, now they do them well; they work and everywhere signs of civilization are seen; they have good manners and their rooms in the parishes are modestly furnished but with a certain refined taste. Everyone has a small library of well-chosen theological and ascetic books. There is no doubt that at the present

moment the young Suriani clergy are superior to the native clergy of all the other dioceses of the Delegation. Then the race of the old agitators disappears more and more.

The people have an edifying piety. The women are saints and they bring up the children in the fear of God. All the boys and girls know the catechism well, and the babies who cannot yet speak, already cross themselves (make the sign of the cross)...

As regards the internal organization, having a state very close to the normal one of the Catholic Church, the Suriani vicariates apostolic, as I have explained above, hold the first place in the Delegation after Goa and in fact today I do not see why they should be kept in a state of inferiority.

The bishops and the clergy suffer very much from this state of inferiority and they are discouraged of it, considering it as an injustice of the Holy See towards them. And it is (really) an injustice when one considers that the recent (beginner) Missions, as those of Galle, Trincomalee, Krishnagar with 8000, 7000 and 4000 Catholics respectively and with 15, 12 and 8 priests, are residential dioceses and the Suriani vicariates with 140.000, 93.000, and 92.000 Catholics respectively and with 400 priests, are in an inferior position; the difference (discrimination) made between the Europeans and the Indians becomes too evident in this case.

Then there is also the consideration that in their present position the Indians do not want to suffer these differences anymore and it is better that today the Holy See grants them this concession, which has to be given also for justice as a free gift of the Pope, rather than then to be forced to give it under the pressure of protests and agitations, something that cannot delay since, tired of waiting, they will return to the use of the means with which from experience they know that a lot is obtained.

My humble opinion is that: these three vicariates apostolic are ready for being erected into dioceses with residential bishops; this is also due for justice; the good of the Church requires that it be done; the moment is opportune to do it and there is no danger nor any inconvenience; rather the delay or hesitation to effect the said

measure cannot but damage and arrest the progress of the Suriani Church in India.

And I say this with an eighteen-year-old experience which I have of these countries and peoples and after a very recent stay of two months among the Surianis of Malabar. Therefore I beg Your Most Reverend Eminence to deign to take this matter into serious consideration.

Meanwhile bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, I have the honour to take my leave with the deepest veneration.

Of Your Most Reverend Eminence, Most humble and most devout servant

✠ Ladislao Michele, Archbishop of Tebe, Apostolic Delegate.

## **2.9. Letter of Apostolic Delegate Pisani Transmitting the Petitions of the Priests of Changanacherry and Ernakulam (Sum. No. IX)**

*On 7 December 1916 Zaleski was transferred from India and was appointed titular patriarch of the Latin patriarchate of Antioch. On 15 December 1919 Msgr. Pietro Pisani was appointed the new Apostolic Delegate who took up residence in Bangalore. Subsequently he visited the Syro-Malabar Church and on that occasion the priests of Ernakulam and Changanacherry submitted to him written petitions requesting the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy. On 3 January 1921 Pisani forwarded them to the Holy See with his own letter, in which he recommended the erection of hierarchy and expressed his opinion about the requests of Msgr. Chulaparambil for a special status for the vicariate of Kottayam.*

Bangalore, 3 January 1921

Most Reverend Eminence,

Many times in my reports to Your Most Reverend Eminence about the conditions of the Syro-Malabar Church, I made mention of the proposal, several times presented to the Sacred Congregation by my venerable predecessors, with regard to the institution of the hierarchy through the erection of those vicariates apostolic into dioceses and the appointment of a metropolitan, designated by

Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi in the person of the present vicar apostolic of Changanacherry, Msgr. Kurialacherry.

During my apostolic visit in Malabar (of which I intend to report to Your Most Reverend Eminence after the plenary meeting of the bishops summoned in Madras for the next 7 January), in almost all the solemn receptions given by the clergy and the faithful to the representative of the Holy Father this desire was expressed with the request to submit it at the feet of His Holiness fortified by the patronage of Your Eminence.

Written petitions were also presented to me, one in Latin addressed to Your Eminence and signed by most of the clergy of Ernakulam;<sup>24</sup> the other in English addressed to the undersigned and signed by the most important members of the clergy of Changanacherry.<sup>25</sup> I enclose both of them to the present letter together with an appeal in Latin<sup>26</sup> of the vicar apostolic of Kottayam, who would like to exclude the Southist people from the Syro-Malabar hierarchy with the pretext that they would not adapt themselves to depend on a Northist metropolitan: from this, Msgr. Chulaparambil deduces, the opportunity, if not the necessity, to erect Kottayam as an archdiocese immediately subjected to the Holy See.

In support of his thesis he encloses the appeal forwarded to the Most Eminent Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda by the three vicars apostolic of Malabar on 1 March 1911 in order to obtain the separation of the Catholic Southists from the Northists through the erection of the vicariate of Kottayam.

I have promised Msgr. Chulaparambil to present, *not to recommend*, the said appeal, because the reasons put forward in its favour do not persuade me. It seems to me that the dependence on the metropolitan directly concerns the suffragan bishop, not the clergy and the faithful; and to satisfy the legitimate sentiment of

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<sup>24</sup> The letter is enclosed afterwards.

<sup>25</sup> See enclosed translation, following page.

<sup>26</sup> Such appeal is not enclosed here because it says the same things of the other petitions of Msgr. Chulaparambil reproduced at the end of the Summary.

independence from the Northists it would be enough the concession of a vicariate apostolic and the possible erection of the same as a diocese, without thinking to introduce two archdioceses in Malabar when every decision about the opportunity to have one of them is still postponed.

Bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, with the deepest veneration, I am pleased to confirm myself, of Your Most Reverend Eminence,

Most humble and most devout servant,

✠ P. Pisani, Archbishop of Constantia, Apostolic Delegate in the East Indies.

### **2.9.1. Petition of the Priests of Changanacherry Presented to Pisani Requesting the Erection of Hierarchy (Sum. No. IX, Encl. I)**

*This is the petition presented by the priests of the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry to Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani concerning the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy. We have failed to trace out the original letter in English from the Indian archives. This is our English version of the Italian translation sent to the Oriental Congregation by the Apostolic Delegate.*

We, the priests of the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry, fully and filially confiding in the sincere desire of Your Excellency for the wellbeing of the Syro-Catholic community of Malabar, submit to the benign consideration of Your Excellency the followings points.

We assure Your Excellency that, even being a few in the presence of Your Excellency now, this is the unanimous voice of all the clergy and the laity of the three vicariates of Changanacherry, Ernakulam and Trichur.

One of the most urgent needs, which we have felt for centuries, is that of having been devoid of pastors (bishops) of our rite. The result of the repeated petitions to the Holy See to remedy this lamentable state of things was that at first we were separated from the Latins and later on vicars apostolic of our rite were



appointed to govern us. Although this benign policy of the Holy See was intended for remedying the evils which afflicted us for a long time, still as regards our vicariate of Changanacherry, we are sorry to report that the appointment of late Dr. Matthew Makil, of Southist nationality, to preside over its destiny, far from bringing the desired effects, contributed only to increase our miseries and complaints.

We are and we will always be grateful to the Holy See for having benignly redressed this unjustified state of things, elevating to the rank of vicar apostolic of Changanacherry our present well-beloved Dr. Thomas Kurialacherry.

So the election of pastors (bishops) of our rite and nationality has considerably helped us to go on along the paths of peace and prosperity. Yet we have not been able to obtain what we desire and what our fathers longed for so intensely; in ecclesiastical matter our Church has not yet obtained that safe basis which alone can guarantee the continuity of our prosperity and our success in every respect—we mean that what we mainly need today is the institution of a hierarchy in our Suriani Church. We, all united, pray and at the same time nourish the firm hope that Your Excellency would like to endeavour with your whole heart, through the institution of the hierarchy, to give the last touch to the immortal work undertaken among us by your worthy predecessors, especially by His Eminence the late Card. Agliardi,<sup>27</sup> whose memory will always be kept by our Church with the most profound gratitude.

As regards this, we cannot but present to Your Excellency an important fact, namely in view of the prosperity and peace, which surround the Suriani Catholic Church of Malabar, *the metropolitan dignity be conferred on any of the vicars apostolic of Changanacherry, Ernakulam or Trichur and on no other*. Lately it

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<sup>27</sup>[On 23 September 1884 Anthony Agliardi was appointed titular archbishop of Caesarea in Palestina and the first Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies, who established his residence in Bombay. During his ministry in India the Catholic St Thomas Christians were separated from the Latin archdiocese of Verapoly and two vicariates were erected in 1887. On 9 May 1887 Agliardi was transferred to the Roman Curia and was elevated to cardinalship on 22 June 1896].

is rumoured that a shower of petitions is coming to the Holy See and to Your Excellency proposing and demanding Dr. Alexander Chulaparambil as the candidate for the archiepiscopal dignity, with see in Kottayam. If this were true, we would not have the slightest doubt to sustain that such petitions, intended to create the impression that they have been presented by the clergy or laity of any of the three aforesaid vicariates, are quite groundless, being for the most part simple inventions.

The truth of our assertion can widely be proved by the declaration unanimously submitted to the Holy See by three of our four pastors and that is the late Msgr. Aloysius Pareparambil, Msgr. John Menacherry and Msgr. Thomas Kurialacherry, our present vicar apostolic.

Invoking on us the blessing of Your Excellency, we profess ourselves, of Your Most Reverend Excellency,

Most grateful and most humble sons, priests of the vicariate of Changanacherry.

In the original numerous signatures follow.

Changanacherry, 17 November 1920.

### **2.9.2. Petition of the Clergy of Ernakulam Presented to Pisani Requesting the Erection of Hierarchy ((Sum. No. IX, Encl. II)**

*Since the original petition of the clergy of Ernakulam demanding the erection of hierarchy was written in Latin, the Apostolic Delegate transferred it to the Holy See without any translation. In this letter addressed to the Prefect of Propaganda Fide the priests of Ernakulam pointed out that the erection of a stable hierarchy is necessary for the unity and progress of the Syro-Malabar Church, as well as for the protection of religious and civil rights.*

Most Eminent and Most Reverend Lord,

On this happy occasion of the first visit of the most illustrious and most reverend Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani in Malabar (coast), the most devoted Syro-Malabar sons of His Holiness, we

the priests of the vicariate apostolic of Ernakulam, present to him this petition so that he may forward it to Your Eminence, and you may benignly make it reach the hands of His Holiness.

And once again not only the priests but also the vicars apostolic individually and jointly with one voice beg His Holiness, that he may hear us living in these separated places, accept our just and constant supplication offered with the greatest docility and submission as well as with filial love and confidence, and he may be deigned to give us your kind and paternal response.

It is well known to Your Eminence, who is such an expert in Eastern affairs and kindly disposed towards us, that our Church traces its origin back to St Thomas the Apostle, and for about three centuries this Church had been governed by native bishops. The series of these bishops, sometimes interrupted, continued until the XVI century when the Portuguese first arrived in India. For political reasons we were forced to accept their jurisdiction in the Synod of Diamper. However, this state of affairs never gave satisfaction to the clergy or to the people. On the contrary, in the year 1653 we made a rebellion – the means, of course, be condemned – in order to obtain our own bishops. Yet with God's help and the grace of the Holy Apostolic See first in 1887 we were granted separate bishops and then in 1896 by the decree "*Quae rei sacrae*" vicars apostolic of our nation and our own rite by Leo XIII of happy memory, whose name always remains indelibly engraved in our hearts. How efficiently and with what diligence our vicars apostolic exercised and are still exercising their functions is something universally known.

To say nothing of other vicariates, our newly created vicariate of Ernakulam without even a bishop's house, had to overcome many difficulties. However, because of the natural capacity and skilfulness in the art of governing of our vicar apostolic, the most illustrious and the most reverend Aloysius Pareparambil, as well as because of the hearty cooperation of the faithful, which was the natural fruit of obtaining their own bishops, in a short time not only the residential house was built, but also a preparatory seminary, an English school for higher studies in Alwaye, and for girls an English school each in Paravur, Chengal, and here in Ernakulam,

as well as about 200 other schools, nine convents for the nuns, many new churches and catechumenates in different places. With all his might, indeed, he laboured for the administration of the temporal goods of the churches, according to the canonical laws, for the extirpation of schismatics and heretics, and especially for the conversion of unbelievers, so that in this vicariate flourishes peace and harmony.

However, we lack one thing so as to reach a more perfect state and to attain further progress. It has not been granted to us to ascend to the peak of ecclesiastical government. Our Church still remains in an imperfect state, our legitimate aspiration is denied to us. We would ardently wish that the Syro-Chaldean-Malabar hierarchy be established. This will serve to unite and consolidate us with a straighter bond, in such way that we can, through concerted forces, act more validly for the protection of our religious and civil rights at the governments which, also in this region, introduce a lot of things contrary to the Christian education of the youth and to the holiness of marriage. For, our bishops are independent from each other, without being united by any immediate bond of authority and consequently the Church suffers much loss. It does not seem necessary to seriously discuss all these matters. If the hierarchy is granted to us all these evils will be rooted out, day by day our Syro-Malabar Church will make progress and, with God's help and protection, will attain the former glory of the Eastern Church and will be a shining jewel at the crown of Saint Peter. We wish also to make known to your Eminence that 24 years ago we were given our own bishops and that this year is the beginning of the Jubilee year of the institution of vicars apostolic. For this reason, therefore, you shall not let this year pass, without granting us the hierarchy.

Again, we earnestly ask your Eminence and through Your Eminence, His Holiness – of whom it is always a glory that he loves us Orientals with a certain singular predilection and he showed this love, erecting the Congregation for the Eastern Church, of which he is the Prefect – that without delay our requests may be heard and he be deigned to grant us this so desired and so necessary provision.

And kissing the sacred purple, with profound reverence we remain,

Your Eminence's most devoted and most obedient sons,  
priests of the vicariate apostolic of Ernakulam.

## **2.10. Petition of the Vicars Apostolic to Pisani, Transmitted to the Oriental Congregation (Sum. No. X)**

*As a part of his letter of 2 April 1920 Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani transmitted to the Oriental Congregation the Italian translation of a petition addressed to him and signed by the three vicars apostolic and the administrator of the vicariate of Trichur (the see was vacant after the death of John Menacherry). In fact the constitution of Syro-Malabar hierarchy delayed also because this Church had no Pontifical and no Code of canon law. Hence, in this petition the Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic request the help of the Apostolic Delegate not only for the erection of hierarchy with a metropolitan or patriarch at its head but also for the approval of the partial translation of the Roman Pontifical into Syriac and a Code of canon law for the Syro-Malabar Church.*

Wellington, 2 April 1920

Most Reverend Eminence,

In confirmation of what I had the honour to submit to the benign consideration of Your Most Reverend Eminence on 27 March 1920, No. 123/20, I consider it my duty to communicate, translated into Italian, the appeal just received and signed by the four Ordinaries, appointed for the administration of those vicariates.

Excellency,

We, the undersigned vicars apostolic of the Syro-Malabar rite and the administrator of the vacant see of the vicariate apostolic of Trichur,<sup>28</sup> submit to the benign consideration of Your Excellency the followings points:

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<sup>28</sup> [Vicar Apostolic Menacherry died on 19 December 1919, after administering the vicariate for 23 years].

Already almost 25 years have elapsed after bishops of our own rite were granted to us. Since from the very beginning, in virtue of a special privilege, we have used the Roman Pontifical for our pontifical services, a translation of the part: "Rite of Conferring Orders" was made and submitted to the S. Congregation for approval. Since it is rather strange that while we celebrate the Mass in Syriac, then we use the Latin rite for the Ordinations, we request Your Excellency to make every effort so that the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church may at least approve that part of the Pontifical for the conferring of Orders.<sup>29</sup>

As regards our Code we have some norms and customs codified about 40 years ago. However, in order that these respond to the needs of our time and the progress of the country, they require modifications. We intend to revise our constitutions without much delay. However, before setting out for this work, we desire to know whether the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church has planned the publication of the canon law for the Oriental Church and, in case affirmative, we would be grateful if a copy of the canons were sent to us, so as to be able to present our usages and customs for the codification. Then if the S. Congregation does not intend to make this step, in such a case we shortly *will present a code of laws for the Syro-Malabar Church*.

We humbly request Your Excellency to make every effort, in order that the S. Congregation may be willing to establish the hierarchy in our provinces, granting us a metropolitan who can have the *title of a patriarch* as in the other Oriental rites, if this seems fitting to the S. Congregation, since in the Lord we believe that with this means, we will be able to attract the heretics of this country to the Catholic Church, who always speak of their patriarch (in the original the signatures follow).

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<sup>29</sup> [After the consecration of the first three native bishops, there emerged the problem of the Pontifical to be used and the unanimous decision of the bishops was to translate the Roman Pontifical into Syriac. However, the bishops never succeeded in completely translating the Roman Pontifical. They made a translation of some parts only and endeavoured to obtain the approval of the Holy See for the same].

Bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, with the deepest veneration, I am pleased to remain, of Your Most Reverend Eminence,

Most humble and most devout servant,

✠ P. Pisani, Archbishop of Costantia, Apostolic Delegate in the East Indies.

P.S.: I responded to the applicants that I would recommend their petition to Your Most Reverend Eminence. I observe only that in India a *black* patriarch could be irksome to the *white* archbishops, over whom he should (it seems to me) take precedence. As regards the metropolitan, I think that he would meet with general acceptance even outside Malabar.

## **2.11. Opinion of Fumasoni Biondi Favouring Changanacherry as the Metropolitan See (Sum. No. XI)**

*While transmitting two petitions to the Holy See, Apostolic Delegate Fumasoni Biondi gave a brief account of the origin of the four vicariates apostolic and their ecclesial status at that time, and expressed his opinion about the metropolitan see. After considering the pros and cons for each see he concluded that Changanacherry should be the metropolitan see, since it was the most important vicariate as regards fervent Christian life, number of Catholic faithful and priests, a large and beautiful cathedral church and financial stability.*

Mylapore, 28 December 1918

Most Reverend Eminence,

Enclosed herewith I transmit to Your Most Reverend Eminence two petitions concerning the institution of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, given to me one in Ernakulam and the other in Changanacherry.

Certainly the thing itself seems reasonable. In 1887 Leo XIII separated the Catholics of Syro-Malabar rite from those of Latin rite and erected the two vicariates apostolic of Trichur and Kottayam in the territory of the Latin archdiocese of Verapoly, entrusting the first to Msgr. Medlycot and the second to Msgr.

Lavigne SJ, who fixed his residence in Changanacherry. In 1896, in lieu of the two vicariates of Trichur and Kottayam, the three vicariates of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry were erected, entrusting them to three Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic: Msgr. Menacherry, Msgr. Pareparambil and Msgr. Makil. Since there existed in the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry a continuous struggle between the two Northist and Southist elements, in 1911 Pius X erected the new vicariate apostolic of Kottayam "for the Southist people" transferring to it Msgr. Makil from Changanacherry, who died in 1914 and the present Vicar Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil succeeded him. Therefore now there are four vicariates apostolic:

*Trichur*: since 1896 it has had for vicar apostolic the 61-year-old Msgr. John Menacherry; the vicariate counts 112,462 Catholics, of whom 3,697 are in the city of Trichur.

*Ernakulam*: since 1896 it has had for vicar apostolic the 70-year-old Msgr. Louis Pareparambil; the vicariate counts 99,434 Catholics, of whom 465 are in the city of Ernakulam.

*Changanacherry*: since 1911 it has had for vicar apostolic the 45-year-old Msgr. Thomas Kurialacherry; the vicariate counts 156,866 Catholics, of whom 10,000 are in the city of Changanacherry.

*Kottayam*: since 1914 it has had for vicar apostolic the 41-year-old Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil; the vicariate counts 29,530 Catholics, of whom only 1,667 are in the city of Kottayam.

So far they have been four separate bodies among which until the present day no bond has existed: the Northists do not agree with the Southists, between Msgr. Menacherry and Msgr. Pareparambil has always existed opposition. So it has never been possible to see them assembled in a conference or to act with mutual agreement. Perhaps the institution of a hierarchy with the subsequent appointment of an archbishop could bring a certain unity and this would be a great good. However, if I have to tell the truth, I think that this is difficult as long as the vicars apostolic of Trichur and Ernakulam – known to all, and I think also to the S. Congregation as old agitators – remain in their place.



Then, once granted the hierarchy, it would be fitting to be rigorous and not to go any further, because it will be highly probable that they begin to think also about a patriarch.

Now *the important question* is about the choice of the metropolitan see. When Msgr. Pareparambil spoke to me about this, I asked him whether he would be happy to remain a suffragan, if the Holy See chose Trichur or Changanacherry as metropolis. He answered me that he will be happy to accomplish the will of the Holy See, but on 25 November he sent me a letter, whose original I enclose herewith. In this he exposes all his reasons, on account of which Ernakulam be declared metropolitan see: its final part is admirable!

The first argument exposed by Msgr. Pareparambil for Ernakulam is that the said see is at an equal distance from the farthest borders of the territory inhabited by the Syro-Malabarians, from river Ponnani in the North to the town of Puraccad in the South. I admit this, but I do not see the necessity that the archiepiscopal see has such a prerogative. Perhaps he thinks that the archbishop has to interfere in the administration of the suffragan dioceses or that the priests and the faithful of the other dioceses continually have to go to the archbishop! And even admitting this, the distances in Malabar are not a great thing: from Changanacherry and Kottayam to Ernakulam it takes five hours by steam-boat; from Ernakulam to Trichur there is a distance of two hours and a quarter by railway.

The other argument is drawn from the fact that Ernakulam is the capital of the state of Cochin. First of all I note that most of the territory of these vicariates does not depend on the small state of Cochin, but on the wider one of Travancore. The vicariates of Changanacherry and Kottayam are in the territory of Travancore; that of Ernakulam is in the territory of Travancore, Cochin and English Cochin; that of Trichur is in the territory of Cochin alone. So I think that the consideration of the dignity of Ernakulam as the capital of the state can be put aside or considered only if one has to choose between Ernakulam and Trichur. However even as regards this point, if Ernakulam is the historical capital of the small state of Cochin, its real capital is Trichur. The Dewan (head of the

Government) of Cochin lately so expressed himself to me, when I recently visited him in Trichur.

The other arguments are rather against Ernakulam. For the number of Catholics the most important vicariate is Changanacherry, then Trichur, then Ernakulam. In the city of Ernakulam the Suriani Catholics are less than five hundred (the vicar apostolic says 4.000 because he counts the Catholics of the neighbouring places), while in the city of Trichur they are 3.697 and in the city of Changanacherry there are 10.000 Catholics.

As regards the priority of erection, it seems to me, it cannot be denied that the vicariate of Trichur is prior to that of Ernakulam.

Ernakulam has a rather small and poor cathedral (Our Lady of the Harbour): better is the Cathedral of Trichur, still better that of Changanacherry.

Moreover, it seems to me, one should not omit to consider (the fact) that the Latin archbishop of Verapoly, with more than 4.500 Catholics in the city, resides in Ernakulam at a few meters of distance from the residence of the vicar apostolic.<sup>30</sup>

If I should choose the metropolitan see between Trichur and Ernakulam, I would be for Trichur, also not to have the two archbishops, the Latin and the Suriani, one opposite to the other. This could also give rise to distressing questions of precedence! ... For example, supposing that the Apostolic Delegate goes there: to whom of the two archbishops will he have to go? To the native archbishop or to the European one? These are questions at which one laughs at a distance, but they are the great questions here! ...

If I am permitted to express my opinion, *I would set the metropolitan see in Changanacherry*. This is not a big city, but an important one for trade and is inhabited by the richest Catholics. Moreover, what counts, Changanacherry is the most numerous vicariate with more than 10.000 Catholics in the city, with the clergy perhaps even too numerous, with the big and beautiful

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<sup>30</sup> [As we have already stated, in 1904 Archbishop Felipe Arginzonis y Astobiza OCD (1897-1918) transferred his see and residence from Verapoly to Ernakulam].

cathedral church. Moreover, the present vicar apostolic, through a special contribution that he has succeeded to obtain from his churches for five years (1% besides the usual 5% that all the churches pay), has attained a fund for the vicariate that he has already invested in plantations, which will yield a very considerable income to the vicariate.

I think to be able to add another reason in favour of the project. Msgr. Arginzonis, archbishop of Verapoly, a dozen years ago transferred his residence from Verapoly, which is a simple village by now, to Ernakulam with the approval of the S. Congregation of Propaganda Fide. The fact caused displeasure to the Maharajah of Travancore, because Verapoly is in his territory, while Ernakulam is under the Rajah of Cochin. Being Changanacherry in the kingdom of Travancore, I think that the Maharajah would be happy to have an archbishop resident in his state again.

I have asked Msgr. Arginzonis about the question and he is of my opinion, that is in favour of Changanacherry.

Msgr. Menacherry and Msgr. Pareparambil will be sorry, but it will be said that since they were not in agreement, we have had to take the plunge. Moreover, we must not have much consideration for persons who pass! ...

Bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, with deep veneration, I remain, of Your Most Reverend Eminence,

Most humble, most devout and most grateful servant,

✠ Pietro Fumasoni Biondi, Archbishop of Dioclea,

Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies.

## 2.12. Opinion of Pietro Pisani Favouring Changanacherry as the Metropolitan See (Sum. No. XII)

*In full agreement with his predecessor Fumasoni Biondi, Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani also proposed Changanacherry as the eventual metropolitan see of the future Syro-Malabar hierarchy. In addition to the positive aspects indicated by his predecessor, Pisani underlined four other merits of Changanacherry which favour its elevation to the status of metropolitan see. Moreover he expressed his opinion against granting the Southist vicariate of Kottayam any special status such as subjecting it immediately to the Holy See.*

10, Miller's Road, Bangalore, 20 July 1922

Most Reverend Eminence,

In response to the venerable letter of Your Most Reverend Eminence on 23 June 1922, No. 7996 I have the honour of informing you that *the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry seems the most suitable for the metropolitan see of the hierarchy to be constituted in Malabar.* In addition to the reasons put forward in support of this opinion by my illustrious predecessor His Eminence Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi in his letter to Your Eminence on 28 December 1918, to which I fully subscribe, I would note that Changanacherry has:

- a) the most important preparatory seminary in Malabar;
- b) a Catholic college for boys, affiliated to the University of Madras;
- c) the greater number of educational institutes, primary schools, as well as social and charitable institutions in comparison not only with the other vicariates, but also with the neighbouring (Latin) dioceses;
- d) three diocesan congregations of native nuns (sisters) with more than twenty religious houses.

If the vicars apostolic of Ernakulam and Trichur and the Ordinaries of Verapoly and Quilon had to be interrogated, I have reason to believe that none of them would hesitate to declare

himself in favour of Changanacherry, but I will not do it, if not upon the proposal of Your Eminence.

I know well that the vicar apostolic of Kottayam is an exception, who would wish that his vicariate be constituted into a diocese (if not simply into an archdiocese) immediately subjected to the Holy See. *Frankly, I see neither the opportunity nor the utility of such a provision, which would turn out to be a symbol of even greater divisions and animosities between Northists and Southists.*

For the susceptibility of the Southists, who cannot prove the asserted superiority of caste over their brethren in St. Thomas and who are not more than 30.000 against almost 400.000 (here the figures are really more eloquent than every comment), the Holy See has made provision through the erection of the vicariate apostolic of Kottayam in the heart of that of Changanacherry, overlooking the difficulty of personal jurisdiction on the faithful of the same rite living in the territory of the other three vicariates. All the more so because the unification of Kottayam to a metropolitan (province) common to the other Suriani vicariates apostolic, even if in very rare cases (for example, an appeal to the superior ecclesiastical tribunal), could involve a certain dependence of the interested (Southists) on a Northist Ordinary, however does not seem to signify any diminution of the Southist self-respect, as Msgr. Chulaparambil would like to think.

I have not sought other opinions on the subject because, knowing Malabar, I prefer to exaggerate in prudence more than in trust: *but I would consider opportune to do it if the Holy See were not satisfied with these personal impressions of mine, which are nonetheless founded on positive and sure data.*

Bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, I have the honour to profess myself with deep veneration, of Your Most Reverend Eminence,

Most humble and most devout servant,

✠ P. Pisani, Archbishop of Constantia, Apostolic Delegate in the East Islands.

### 2.13. Vote of Msgr. Zaleski on the Constitution of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (Sum. No. XIII)

*Ladislao Michele Zaleski, who was Apostolic Delegate in India from 1892 to 1916 became titular patriarch of the Latin patriarchate of Antioch on 7 December 1916. He had his residence in Rome and was consulted on important matters especially with regard to India. In his present vote formulated at the request of the Congregation for the Oriental Church Zaleski, who had written to the Holy See many times about the necessity of constituting a hierarchy, confirmed his strongly positive opinion about the opportunity of such a provision. He favoured Ernakulam as the metropolitan see because of its particular geographical position and strategic economic and political importance. Zaleski, who had been absolutely contrary to the erection of a separate vicariate for the Southist community since he considered it as a kind of canonization of caste in India, was naturally opposed to granting any special position to the said vicariate.*

Rome, 78 Via della Croce, 27 June 1922

Most Reverend Excellency,

With the venerable letter of 26 June No. 7996/22 Your Most Reverend Excellency deigns to consult me about the following matter:

1. Opportunity to erect the Suriani vicariates apostolic of Malabar into residential dioceses;
2. Where, in this case, the metropolitan see is to be established;
3. What provisions be taken for the diocese of Kottayam for not rekindling animosities between the castes of the Northists and the Southists.

#### I.

As regards the first question, that is whether the four Suriani vicariates apostolic of Malabar have to be erected into dioceses, I respond, without even the slightest hesitation: *Affirmative*.

I have never been able to understand the reason why it has been hesitated for such a long time to comply with this right and opportune request of the Suriani bishops. It is something that should have already been done 10 years ago.

Of all the dioceses of India the abovementioned vicariates are those that come very close to the normal organization of the Church, with the clergy that are little different from the European priests and numerous Christians, it is true, of a little turbulent character, but profoundly Catholic.

Therefore I do not hesitate to answer the question: *Affirmative.*

## II.

The second question, that is: where the metropolitan see is to be established?

For one who knows Malabar very well, there cannot be any hesitation:

*Ernakulam* finds favour as the metropolitan see. It is a city of great future, which will become one of the main harbours in India and today it can already be said the main city, the *metropolis* of Malabar.

*Trichur*, second-class town, already decadent, then its decadence will be accentuated more and more with the development of *Ernakulam*, cannot be even taken into consideration.

*Changanacherry* is an obscure place. I have never arrived there without wandering for at least two hours as Moses in the desert, before finding the way leading there.

Then to establish the archiepiscopal see in Kottayam would be something crazy, which would infallibly lead to a long period of troubles and agitations.

The metropolitan see must be established in *Ernakulam*.

### III.

The erection of the vicariate apostolic of Kottayam, or rather the recognition of the caste in the appointment of bishops, was a mistake, which will have fatal consequences in the development of the Catholic Church in India. The evil has been done and it is irreparable.

Now what provisions be taken in view of the erection of this vicariate into a diocese?

There are two alternatives: 1) To subject this diocese to the metropolitan see of Ernakulam, thus forming only one ecclesiastical province of all the Surianis. This would be the desirable thing. Or 2) To make the diocese of Kottayam immediately subjected to the Holy See, something little desirable because it would be as if a new approval of the exclusiveness of caste and it would accentuate the danger to which the Holy See will have to look and which can lead to the ruin of the most beautiful Catholic communities in India.

Being the vicar apostolic of Kottayam in Rome now, perhaps his opinion could be sought: which of the two provisions seems to him opportune.

### IV.

Then, while establishing in India a Suriani ecclesiastical province, first of all it is necessary to demand from these bishops that some ecclesiastical courts of first and second instance be established to judge the cases according to canon law. (What is needed) is not a simulacrum, as at present, but real tribunals (CIC 1917, cc. 1572-1596), entrusting the Apostolic Delegate with the task of supervising their functioning.

The usual arbitrary sentences of the bishops, even in very grave matter of excommunication and suspension, not always in conformity with justice and equity, are one of the main reasons of troubles and frequent rebellions in this region.

The bishop must certainly punish the criminals, but he has to do this not arbitrarily, but in conformity with the sacred canons.



Bowed to the kiss of the sacred ring, I have the honour to take my leave with the most profound veneration.

Of Your Most Reverend Excellency, Most devout servant,

✠ Ladislao Zaleski, Patriarch of Antioch.

## **2.14. Additional Notes of Zaleski about the Erection of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (Sum. No. XIV)**

*Zaleski, a tenacious person and very influential in the Roman Curia, was determined to obtain what he wanted. Since nothing happened even an year after his positive vote, he wrote again, highlighting the necessity of constituting the Syro-Malabar hierarchy, with Ernakulam as the metropolitan see and rejecting any special status for the Southist vicariate of Korttayam.*

Since about a year ago I was entrusted with formulating my vote about the opportunity to erect the vicariates apostolic of Malabar into residential sees, the Suriani bishops have never ceased to appeal on this subject to all the present and past Apostolic Delegates and probably, for a stronger reason, to the S. Congregation.

Then the thing (finds favour) stands out both from the point of view of the simplest justice and also from that of opportunity and the good of the holy Church. Therefore why to tergiversate? It would be better to grant this as a free and gracious gift of the Holy See than to be then forced to do this with the usual troubles and agitations, all the more so since the next synod of Bangalore presents the occasion for this.

Then to clear the situation, it is necessary to answer a few questions.

1. Whether it is fitting to erect these vicariates into residential sees?

*Response:* Affirmative. It is not only fitting, but also necessary, right and opportune.

2. How to proceed with this erection?

*Response:* Nothing of new or extraordinary be done, as for example four dioceses immediately subjected to the Holy See. Proceed as usual in the holy Church. Create an ecclesiastical province with a metropolitan at the head.

3. Whether it is fitting to consult the abovementioned vicars apostolic as regards the choice of the metropolitan?

*Response:* Negative. Each of the four desires to become archbishop, and to consult them on this subject would create nothing but confusion, and also disagreements and hostilities among them.

In this matter follow the precedent of the erection of ecclesiastical hierarchy in India in 1886; at that time the Sacred Congregations themselves chose the metropolitan sees and left to the bishops only the option to decide, to which ecclesiastical province they wanted to join. Then this problem does not occur now, there being only one province.

4. Which see has to be chosen as metropolitan see?

*Response:* Ernakulam is already the most important city and it has a great future, Kottayam and Trichur are places of secondary importance. Changanacherry is an obscure place, of more difficult access, rather an agglomeration of neighbouring villages than a city, which is not found even on the maps of India. Therefore the choice would be between Ernakulam and Trichur. The former of these cities grows and, as said, has a great future. Instead Trichur decreases and it will lose more and more its importance. Therefore I do not hesitate to give my vote to Ernakulam.

Then the argument in favour of Msgr. Kurialacherry, namely the vicariate of Changanacherry has the greatest number of Catholics and priests, does not count, given that the eventuality of a division of this vicariate into two has already been considered, something that would make it the smallest of the Suriani dioceses.

5. Whether the Southist diocese of Kottayam has to be subjected to the abovementioned metropolitan see or erected into a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See?

*Response:* Affirmative to the first. Negative to the second.

Every exception made for Kottayam will be interpreted in the whole of India as a new juridical recognition of castes, something that will have very grave consequences for the future of this Church. Then it will not help to pacify the minds because, as soon as this exemption having been obtained, archiepiscopal title will be asked for Kottayam, adducing as a reason the inferiority of the Southists, a new juridical recognition of castes.

Then the argument of Msgr. Chulaparambil, namely the Northists and the Southists are two different nationalities, cannot hold good.

The Northists and the Southists are none other than two castes of the Malayalam Nation absolutely in the same way, as the Vellala and the Scianari are two castes of the "Famulica Nation", the Brahmins and the Ciardi are two castes of the Konkani Nation.

## **2.15. Letter of Alexander Chulaparambil to the Oriental Congregation Requesting Special Status for Kottayam (Sum. No. XV)**

*On 8 December 1920 Vicar Apostolic Alexander Chulaparambil wrote to the Oriental Congregation requesting that the vicariate apostolic of Kottayam be erected as a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See and independent of the future metropolitan of the Syro-Malabar Church or as an archiepiscopal see without any suffragan. In support of his request he forwarded to the Congregation a copy of the letter dated 1 March 1911 signed by all the three vicars apostolic of that time and sent to Pope Pius X and to the Prefect of Propaganda Fide in which they proposed the erection of a separate Southist vicariate as the best and lasting solution for the eradication of the conflicts between the Southist Bishop Mathew Makil and the Northists in the then vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry. Here we present the request of Chulaparambil; the mentioned letter of the three vicars apostolic is reproduced as the next document.*

The Southist people, whose pastoral care has been entrusted to me, were separated from the Northist community by the decree "In Universi Christiani" of 29 August 1911 promulgated by the

Holy Father Pius X of happy memory in order to provide in a more satisfactorily manner for the spiritual good of this people and to pacify the minds of the dissidents. Therefore, when the S. Congregation will decide to establish the hierarchy for our Syro-Malabar rite, I earnestly ask that this vicariate, constituted for the Southist people, be erected as a see, independent of the metropolitan, but directly dependent on the Holy See. For the same reasons for which the people in this vicariate were separated from the other people already included in the other vicariates of the same rite through the aforementioned decree, this vicariate be erected as a archiepiscopal see without suffragans. Such dioceses directly dependant on the Holy See and metropolitan sees without suffragans already exist for reasons known to the Holy See, both in Italy and in other parts of the world.

The reasons why I so ask the Sacred Congregation now, are found in the petitions dated 1 March 1911 and presented by all the Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic then existing in our region to the Supreme Pontiff as well as to the Sacred Congregation,<sup>31</sup> the copies of which I enclose with this letter. If the see of Kottayam is constituted under a Northist metropolitan, I am afraid that the same difficulties and confusion may be repeated and the peace and concord now reigning among us may be lost.

After I have exposed the necessity and opportunity of separating the see of Kottayam (or Southist people) from the metropolitan jurisdiction of the Northists, I earnestly and humbly ask the Sacred Congregation again and again that by such a disposition it be deigned to conserve my people in the unity and beauty of peace, and with greatest reverence, as is due, I kiss the sacred purple and I am pleased to remain.

Given from our seminary in Brahmamangalam on 8 December 1920, feast of the Immaculate Virgin.

Of Your Eminence, most obedient son, Alexander, bishop, vicar apostolic of Kottayam.

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<sup>31</sup> See the following page, this letter is attached.

**2.16. Joint Letter of Syro-Malabar Vicars Apostolic in 1911  
Forwarded by Chulaparambil in Support of His Requests  
(Sum. No. XVI)**

*As already stated, here we reproduce the petition of the three Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic dated 1 March 1911 and enclosed by the Southist Vicar Apostolic Alexander Chulaparambil in support of his requests. We have already published the original Latin text and the English translation of this letter.<sup>32</sup> We present it here gain, since it was included in the Summary attached to the Report presented to the plenary assembly of the Oriental Congregation. The letter signed by the three vicars apostolic was sent both to Pope Pius X and to the Prefect of Propaganda Fide. Formerly we published the one addressed to the Prefect of Propaganda Fide. Since in the present Summary the letter to the Pope is found, we include the same. The two are not different in their essential content.*

Trichur, 1 March 1911

[Before His Holiness Pope Pius X]

Most Holy Father,

We the undersigned, by the grace of God and the favour of the Apostolic See vicars apostolic for the Syro-Malabar Christians dwelling in East Indies on the Malabar Coast – on this most pleasing occasion, and it may be said, worthy of perpetual memory, as Your Holiness is not disdaining to honour two of us at your presence – first of all express our gratitude for this so great a privilege granted to us.

Nor do we consider it out of place to refer to Your Holiness on this occasion that the entire Catholic and Syro-Malabar Christendom conserves an indelible and grateful memory of His Holiness Leo XIII, Pontiff of immortal memory, Predecessor of Your Holiness in this Office, who admitting their requests, namely, that they be granted bishops of their own rite and nation, in 1896

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<sup>32</sup> [P. Pallath & G. Kanjirakkatt, *Origin of the Southist Vicariat of Kottayam; Acts and Facts*, 119-124 & 245-249].

kindly established three Vicariates, namely Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry under so many vicars apostolic of Syro-Malabar rite.

Afterwards, although we are here, in imitation of Apostle St Paul who with the intention that his labours might not be left to chance or in vain, visited St Peter, the prince of the apostles in Jerusalem, and in fulfilment likewise of the obligation that bishops and vicars apostolic should at certain times visit the Holy See and disclose to it the state of their Church, we also approach the Cathedra of St Peter, the centre of the Church, personally and through this petition. We consider it opportune, indeed necessary, after exposing some necessary matters with a report, to inform the Holy See about the present status of our Church, in order to take counsel for its greater good; hence we submit, as is appropriate, with the greatest reverence and submission, the following to the high and benevolent consideration of Your Holiness.

Among the Syro-Malabar faithful, as is known to the Holy See, there exist two communities or peoples, tracing their origins back to two different races; on account of this they are different and separate from each other, with a distinctive name proper to each party, namely Northist and Southist. These, even though they are otherwise good Christians, yet in social and domestic life as well as in customs they differ much between them and are not well disposed to each other. On account of this, they have lived for fifteen centuries without any bond of consanguinity or affinity, nor can they be induced to this not for reason of castes, but because they belong to races or communities different one from the other.

The same vicar apostolic, of Southist origin, governs both these races, present in the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry; within its boundaries alone both of them inhabit intermingled. In the other two vicariates apostolic of Trichur and Ernakulam, except for the three Southist parishes entrusted to the vicariate of Ernakulam, their vicars apostolic govern only the single people of the Northists; these vicars apostolic being of the same race as their subjects, and consequently Northists. Hence in these vicariates between the governing and the governed good harmony and concord exist. On account of this they are making progress in every

respect, with the collaboration and assistance of the people. For, we absolutely need the necessary helping hand of the people, as we are really under pressure with regard to money, since we do not have any financial subsidy from the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, nor from the Propagation of Lyons in France, nor from any other charitable society in Europe.

In the vicariate of Changanacherry, on the other hand, each party is embittered on account of discrepancy and distinction, since it is governed in a combined manner with the other by one and the same bishop. Hence not only do these two parties not cooperate nor help each other, but also on occasion they readily cause difficulty upon difficulty for the bishops with regard to governance and trouble for the Holy See, etc. For example, the Northists – especially stirred up at present by some agitators, as regularly happens from time to time – presuming that their present bishop desires only the good of the community of the Southists and interpreting his acts and admonitions in a manner completely contrary to the facts, are impeding the implementation of his right decisions and creating much agitation, thus causing damage to the Church and indignity to religion and send in many petitions for the realization of their desires, etc.

In these circumstances, to govern such communities naturally inclined to different or rather to opposite directions in the same parish church or in one and the same vicariate apostolic, it is a most difficult thing for the bishops and is harmful to both parties. This is very clearly proven by the latest measures of both the prelates of the archdiocese of Verapoly and the Most Rev. Charles Lavigne SJ, formerly vicar apostolic for both parties in the vicariate of Kottayam, who after various attempts, forced by the circumstances, finally divided the parishes containing both races and separated the people from each other. Indeed Bishop Lavigne also, with an indult of the Holy See, arranged things in such a way that each race, though under himself, be governed separately under a different vicar general of its own as separate communities.<sup>33</sup> That

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<sup>33</sup> [After obtaining permission from Propaganda Fide, on 8 September 1889 Vicar Apostolic Charles Lavigne appointed Mathew Makil as vicar general for the Southist community and the Southist priests Joseph Pallikunnel and Mathew

this would be for the greater good of both parties is evident from the fact that after the aforementioned separations not only has peace been established among them but also both groups have endeavoured to enrich and embellish their parish churches and the community by their efforts.

Hence the Southists, too, though now they are under a Southist vicar apostolic, have several times petitioned from the Holy See and from the most illustrious Apostolic Delegate in the East Indies, that the present vicar apostolic of Changanacherry or any other be kindly assigned to them in an exclusive manner.

From the aforementioned facts, it is evident that as long as this vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry comprises both communities, there will be no progress in it, nor will the bishop, be he a Southist or a Northist, be at peace, but rather he will be in such a position that he must always bear a heavy cross, as we are taught by the experience of fifteen years.

Since the state of the Syro-Malabar Church or rather that of the vicariate of Changanacherry is in such a deplorable condition, in order to promote a change for the better in its status, we, the three vicars apostolic, belonging to both peoples and very well acquainted with the nature, character and customs of our subjects, desiring their greater good and progress in temporal and above all spiritual aspects, after long deliberation and repeated consultations between us, in order to exterminate the disturbances and quarrels, to eradicate their causes and to recompose the divisions, have identified three (two) means which alone are suitable solutions. These are:

1. After re-establishing the recently suppressed vicariate of Kottayam,<sup>34</sup> appoint Lord Mathew Makil, the present vicar

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Pallikunnel as councillors. Thus he introduced a separate administration for the Southist community].

<sup>34</sup> [With the permission of Propaganda Fide, Vicar Apostolic Charles Lavigne transferred his residence from Kottayam to Changanacherry on 19 March 1891, but the official title of the vicariate continued to be Kottayam. However, in the apostolic letter *Quae rei sacrae* of 28 July 1896 the vicariate was officially named Changanacherry and the name Kottayam disappeared].



apostolic of Changanacherry as bishop for the community of Southists alone with the title of the vicar apostolic of Kottayam, which place being their centre and the metropolis of the Jacobite Syrians, and appoint another bishop from among the Northists in the vicariate of Changanacherry for them alone, so that each one can govern his people with peace and prosperity. This is more fitting and has been longed for and petitioned by both parties.

2. Or decide in such a way that the vicar apostolic of Changanacherry, whether a Southist or a Northist, residing there and governing the Northists, should always have a coadjutor bishop from the other community who, residing in Kottayam, should govern the entire Southist people, but with the right of succession to the office of the vicar apostolic of Changanacherry. In this way each community can be governed by a bishop of its own, as previously the Holy See stipulated that the archbishop of Verapoly should have a coadjutor bishop, who would independently govern the Suriani Church, while the former would govern the Latin Church.<sup>35</sup>

[3. Or decide that in the vicariate of Changanacherry there should always also be a coadjutor bishop from the group other than that of the vicar apostolic with the right of succession in the office of the vicar apostolic and who governs his respective people.]<sup>36</sup>

Therefore, after exposing all these matters, what are we now earnestly requesting is that Your Holiness, desiring the good and wellbeing of the Syro-Malabar Church at the maximum level, from these three remedies, which we humbly and with confidence unanimously present for its greater good and progress in these few lines, benevolently accepting preferably the first one as the most efficacious of all for radically eradicating all kinds of discords from their midst, be deigned to satisfy the sons of the Syro-Malabar Church and thus restore tranquillity forever in the

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<sup>35</sup> [On 17 August 1877 Pope Pius IX appointed Fr. Marcelline of St Therese OCD as coadjutor bishop to the Vicar Apostolic Leonard Mellano OCD, for the pastoral care of the Suriani Catholics in the then vicariate apostolic of Verapoly].

<sup>36</sup> The third pont is not found in the letter to the Pope.

vicariate of Changanacherry, agitated for a long time by waves of quarrels.

Lastly having prostrated to the kiss of Your feet, earnestly requesting Your apostolic blessing for us and for our flocks, of Your Holiness,

Malabar, 1 March 1911,

✠ John Menacherry, Bishop of Parai and Vicar Apostolic of Trichur,

✠ Mathew Makil, Bishop of Tralli and Vicar Apostolic of Changanacherry,

✠ Aloysius Pareparambil, Bishop of Tiana and Vicar Apostolic of Ernakulam

[True copy, ✠ Alexander, Bishop Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam].

## **2.17. Letter of Alexander Chulaparambil to Fumasoni Biondi Requesting Special Status for Kottayam (Sum. No. XVII)**

*The former Apostolic Delegate in India, Fumasoni Biondi was transferred to Japan on 6 December 1919 and was then appointed Secretary of Propaganda Fide on 16 June 1921. Even then Alexander Chulaparambil maintained contact with him and in fact found the unique patron in him in Rome, who alone favoured the creation of the Southist vicariate of Kottayam as a diocese independent of the metropolitan of the Syro-Malabar Church, but directly subjected to the Holy See. Chulaparambil asked him to make known to the Oriental Congregation his desires concerning the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy and especially concerning the future independent status of Kottayam, as a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See or an archdiocese without any suffragan.*

Rome, 24 May 1922

Excellency,

Since Your Excellency has known our country and since now you are a consultant of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Church

in Rome, I take the liberty of exposing to you my thought about the hierarchy in Malabar, begging you to make known my desires to the S. Congregation:

1. The hierarchy should be established as soon as possible. The delay on such a matter is harmful.

2. The Church of Malabar should have a separate hierarchy without any relationship with the patriarchs both of the Syro-Chaldean rite and of the Syro-Antiochene one.

3. In establishing the hierarchy, the diocese of Kottayam should be exempted from the jurisdiction of the metropolitan and be placed at the immediate dependence of the Holy See as some dioceses in and out of Italy: this for the greater peace and tranquillity in the region.

4. I would ask the S. Congregation to make the see of Kottayam independent of the others, an archiepiscopal see without suffragans, as there are already some of them in the holy Church. This will be an allurements for the Southist Jacobites, with the conversion of whom it will be possible shortly – as I hope in the Lord – another prefecture or vicariate apostolic.

5. The reasons for such an arrangement are the same exposed by the vicars apostolic of Malabar to the Holy Father and to the S. Congregation on 1 March 1911 for the creation of a separate vicariate for the Southists.

6. Probably any other arrangement would rekindle all the previous discords.

7. With the letter of 8 December 1920 I have briefly exposed my mind (thought) to the S. Congregation for the Oriental Church.

Therefore I beg Your Excellency to make known to the S. Congregation our situation and to induce it to grant what I ask.

With profound veneration, etc ...

✠Alexander, Bishop Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam.

## 2.18. Observations of Fumasoni Biondi about the Request of Chulaparambil (Sum. No. XVIII)

*In accordance with the desire of Chulaparambil, Fumasoni Biondi, who was bound to the said prelate "with sentiments of respect and friendship" transmitted the aforementioned request to the assessor of the Oriental Congregation with his own forwarding letter, favouring the independent status of Kottayam as a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See.*

Rome, May 1922

Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Monsignor,

To satisfy the desire of Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil, titular bishop of Busiri, vicar apostolic of Kottayam, I send to the S. Congregation the translation of a letter which he remitted to me after a conversation. Having been the Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies for three years, I am bound to the aforesaid prelate with sentiments of respect and friendship. As You know, in Malabar within the Latin Archdiocese of Verapoly (with residence in Ernakulam) there are three vicariates apostolic: Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry for the Northist Syro-Malabar Catholics; then the Southist Syro-Malabar Catholics, who are in the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry, form *a separate Southist vicariate, that of Kottayam, the smallest of all counting 30.000 faithful*, while each one of the other three count not less than 100.000.

I hope that you will not be hurt if I take the liberty to make some observations "in conscience" about the letter of Msgr. Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam.

I perfectly agree *with the first point* and on this subject in 1918 or 1919 I sent to the S. Congregation a report from Bangalore in the Indies, after having visited the Syro-Malabar vicariates.<sup>37</sup>

I perfectly agree *with the second point*. The union of the Malabar Churches to the Syro-Chaldean or Syro-Antiochene patriarchate would not give them the least advantage. At present

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<sup>37</sup> [For the letter of Fumasoni Biondi dated 28 December 1918, doc. 2.11. in this book].

these Churches are self-sufficient: the faithful are learned and well-to-do; celibacy is well observed there; the ecclesiastical discipline is fairly in force and it will be still better in force when a Code and the Pontifical in their language will be given to those Churches—matters that were already object of other reports of mine. Finally it should not be forgotten that in the South of the Indies the Syro-Malabar Churches form the fulcrum of Christianity both for the number and for the condition. Because of this every relaxation (loosening) of the discipline among them, especially with regard to ecclesiastical celibacy, would bring about very tragic consequences for the nascent Church of the East Indies.<sup>38</sup>

As regards the third point, the idea that the diocese of Kottayam to be erected is declared immediately subjected to the Holy See smiles on me. This for the deplorable fact that Northists and Southists do not associate with.

I would comply with the request contained in *the fourth point*, if the number of the Southist Catholics, through the conversion of the Southist Jacobites, rose at least to 100.000. As I understand, the happy movement of conversions among the Jacobites is not so high as one would like to make others believe and this same movement should be both fomented and watched over by the S. Congregation, especially for what concerns the Jacobite priests.

I humbly submit to Your Most Reverend Lordship these observations, which I have taken the liberty to make in my conscience about the letter of the vicar apostolic of Kottayam that I enclose, so that you may do whatever you like.

With sentiments of profound respect and veneration I profess, of Your Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Lordship,

Most devotedly in the Lord,

✠ P. Fumasoni Biondi, Archbishop of Dioclea,

Consultant of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Church.

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<sup>38</sup> [He wrote like this perhaps because in the Antiochene and Chaldean Churches, in tune with the Eastern tradition, celibacy was and is optional, while in the Malabar Church it was obligatory from the time of the Synod of Diamper (1599). Hence, the union of the Syro-Malabar Church with any of them would have signified the adoption of the Eastern discipline with regard to celibacy as well].

## **2.19. Petition of Alexander Chulaparambil to Pope Pius XI Requesting Special Status for Kottayam (Sum. No. XIX)**

*Perhaps encouraged by his friend Fumasoni Biondi in Rome, on 16 October 1922 Chulaparambil wrote a personal letter to Pope Pius XI, requesting that in case of the eventual constitution of Syro-Malabar hierarchy, the vicariate of Kottayam be erected as a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See or rather as a metropolitan see without suffragans.*

Most Holy Father,

Alexander Chulaparambil, titular bishop of Busiris, vicar apostolic of Kottayam, having most humbly prostrated himself at the feet of Your Holiness requests permission to explain the following:

The Syro-Malabar Church had three native hierarchs and three vicariates apostolic in the year 1896. However, in the year 1911, the fourth vicariate and another bishop were granted for the race, commonly called the "Southist people" among the Syro-Malabarians. These people are descendants of the Syrian immigrants to our region in the fourth century, who until now remain without any relationship of marriage with the other Christians and possess their own parishes and churches. The other race, commonly designated "Northist people", being less content with the Southists, refused to accept the bishop of the Southist race and made him suffer greatly. The Holy See, after due consideration, separated both races, and placed them under their own proper bishops, and thus peace and harmony were established in our Church.

As at present, the argument is about the hierarchy to be instituted for us, which I also request as desirable in every way, one observation and indeed a very serious one seems to me necessary, namely the same problems and all the old complaints will surface again, if the Southist race (or the diocese Kottayam) is placed under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of the Northist race. And therefore it is necessary that the diocese of Kottayam for the Southists should be independent of the jurisdiction of the

metropolitan, but directly dependent on the Holy See, just as there are many dioceses in Italy, as well as in other parts of the world.

As the Syrian immigrants were propagators of the faith in the Malabar region, it seems to me entirely appropriate that the diocese of Kottayam for their descendants be made also a metropolitan see without suffragan bishops, or at least the bishop of Kottayam be made a titular archbishop, as are other dioceses and other bishops in the holy Church, even in East Indies.

Of all these things, as far as is known, our present Apostolic Delegate Msgr. Pisani and his predecessor Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi gave a favorable opinion to the Holy See.<sup>39</sup>

He (the vicar apostolic) submits all these matters to the kind consideration of the Most Holy Father, who has a paternal heart for us, and kissing the feet of His Holiness in all humility he earnestly implores the apostolic blessing for himself, for all his clergy and people, as well as for their benefactors, and he remains.

Always most obedient, at Rome, on 16 October 1922,

The most humble servant, Alexander, Bishop Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam.

## **2.20. Letter of Fumasoni Biondi Transmitting the Petition of Chulaparambil Delivered to Him by the Holy Father to the Oriental Congregation (Sum. No. XX)**

*Strangely enough Pope Pius XI gave the abovementioned letter of Chulaparambil not to the Oriental Congregation, competent for the Eastern Churches, but to the very same Fumasoni Biondi, who was the secretary of Propaganda Fide and who was the only one in Rome favourable to the idea of the vicar apostolic of Kottayam. Fumasoni, in his turn, transferred the same letter, received from the Pope to the Oriental Congregation with his own forwarding letter in which he gave the idea that the Pope was favourable to the erection of Kottayam as a diocese*

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<sup>39</sup> [As we have already indicated only Fumasoni Biondi favoured some kind of special status for Kottayam; the Apostolic Delegate Pisani wrote against any such provision. See doc. 2.12].

*immediately subjected to the Holy See. The phrase used by Fumasoni Biondi for expressing the favourable opinion of the Pope is the same as the one contained in his own letter on the subject (cf. doc. 2. 18).*

Rome, 28 October 1922

The undersigned Msgr. Secretary of Propaganda Fide has the honour of making known to the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Monsignor Assessor of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Church what follows:

In the audience of Monday 23 of the current month, the Holy Father asked for information to Msgr. Secretary of Propaganda Fide about the letter, which is enclosed here, left in his venerable hands by Msgr. Alexander Chulaparambil, titular bishop of Busiri and vicar apostolic of Kottayam (Malabar) with regard to the Catholic hierarchy to be erected for the Syro-Malabar Catholics.

The Holy Father, after having benignly listened to the information given him by Msgr. Secretary of Propaganda Fide, former Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies, ordered him to transmit the letter of Msgr. Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam to the secretariat of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Church, adding that when the hierarchy among the Syro-Malabarians will be erected, the project of creating the vicariate apostolic of Kottayam for the Southists as a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See smiled on him, nevertheless remitting to other times the erection of the said vicariate as an archdiocese immediately subjected (to the Holy See).

✠ P. Fumasoni Biondi, Archbishop of Dioclea, Secretary.



### 3. Final Observations of Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani concerning Syro-Malabar Hierarchy

*It seems that there was much hesitation in Rome with regard to the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy. Just a few weeks before the plenary assembly Apostolic Delegate Pisani was gain asked to express his opinion about the maturity of the vicariates apostolic, choice of metropolitan see and the special status for Kottayam. With regard to the maturity of the vicariates and the opportunity of constituting the Syro-Malabar hierarchy with an ecclesiastical province, headed by an archbishop he did not have the slightest doubt, as he had convincingly asserted in his former letters. Although he maintained his previous opinion with regard to Changanerry as the most suitable metropolitan see, learning the trend in Rome in favour of Ernakulam, because of its political, economic and geographical importance, he did not oppose to the choice of this city. However, he proposed that the Vicar Apostolic Thomas Kurialacherry of Changanacherry, the most suitable person for the office of archbishop, be promoted to the dignity of Assistant to Papal Throne.*

Apostolic Delegation of the East Indies, No. 3812; Rome, 12 November 1923

To His Most Rev. Eminence Cardinal G. Tacci, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church

Most Reverend Eminence,

With reference to the verbal report that I had the honour of making to Your Most Reverend Eminence about the question of the hierarchy in Malabar, I think it opportune to insist on some points which seem to me worthy of particular consideration, submitting them to the wise judgement of Your Eminence.

1. Maturity of those vicariates apostolic for their erection into residential dioceses.

To the considerations submitted by me to the S. Congregation in frequent reports on the subject, I will add only the impression (sensation) reported by the archbishop of Bombay and by the rector of the Pontifical Seminary of Kandy, who were present at the

consecration of the vicar apostolic of Trichur in July 1921;<sup>40</sup> on that occasion they also visited the other Malabar vicariates.

The former told me: "I would never have expected to be present at such manifestations of faith and piety in India. I am almost ashamed to return to Bombay".

The latter wrote to me: "In my life I have rarely seen so impressive assemblies of the clergy and faithful: it seemed to me to be in Belgium".

As a matter of fact in India a few dioceses have given me more consolations and less troubles than those vicariates apostolic. Churches and chapels are numerous and more than enough for the need; primary and secondary schools are flourishing; the attendance and the behaviour of the faithful at the sacred services are admirable; the observance of the precepts of the Church is exemplary; the episcopal curias (as results also from *The Catholic Directory*) are arranged in conformity with the prescriptions of canon law; the ecclesiastical discipline is certainly observed not less than in any diocese of India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka); native woman religious congregations prosper more and more (only in the vicariate apostolic of Changanacherry there are three of them with a total of 190 professed nuns and 91 novices); the formation of the clergy in the preparatory seminaries is good (104 seminarians only in Changanacherry), while in the pontifical seminaries of Kandy and Puthempally – not to speak about the Urban College of Propaganda – the Malabarians distinguish themselves in piety and progress in studies.

Therefore it is not surprising that the evident condition of inferiority, in which those Christianities have been left for so long time (despite many appeals) in relation to the dioceses of the Latin rite subjected to Propaganda, especially in comparison with their Malabar brothers of the archdiocese of Verapoly, is strongly and painfully felt both by the clergy and the faithful, and that every day the persuasion is more and more confirmed – deep-rooted also

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<sup>40</sup> [The first native Vicar Apostolic John Menacherry died on 19 December 1919 and Francis Vazhapilly was appointed vicar apostolic of Trichur on 5 April 1921 and he was consecrated on 6 July 1921].

among the Jacobites – that the fact of belonging to the Oriental rite and of not depending on the Propaganda constitutes a prejudice detrimental to them (in the eyes of) at the Holy See. The recent erection of Calicut and ..., both bordering on Malabar, has contributed to intensify this feeling and to sharpen the desire to finally see them equal to the other Catholics of the East Indies and elevated to the level of the 'Malabarians' of Latin rite in the (Catholic) Church, to whom certainly they are not inferior from any point of view.

## 2. Appointment and See of the Metropolitan

As I have never been in doubt about the opportunity and the urgency to come to the erection of those vicariates apostolic into residential sees, so I do not see the reason why these dioceses should not be constituted as a hierarchy with an archbishop of their own rite at the head. As regards the choice of the see, following and confirming (with statistical data) the opinion of the Most Reverend Msgr. Fumasoni Biondi, I have also proposed Changanacherry. However recently, a little before my return to Rome, favourable opinions were referred to me about the choice of Ernakulam, being this city the seat of the government of Cochin, a first-class trade centre in Malabar, which with the opening of the new harbour (of which nevertheless result is uncertain) is destined to be one of the first coastal cities of the East, rival of Bombay and Calcutta.

It is true that, except for relatively rare cases of appeal to the superior ecclesiastical tribunal and for inter-diocesan meetings, the dependence of suffragans on the metropolitan comes to a well-little thing, but it is also certain that Kottayam, although at the door of Changanacherry, would not like – for the known competitions of castes – to be subjected to that see, while Trichur, which borders on Ernakulam – connected with this city by the railway – has with Changanacherry a difficult communication (four hours from Ernakulam by car and seven hours by steam-boat). Therefore it is obvious to presume that at least three of those four vicariates apostolic would prefer Ernakulam as metropolitan see, moreover a city designated for pre-eminence by other reasons either already mentioned or well-known to the S. Congregation. However if such

criterion prevailed, I would still like to beg Your Most Reverend Eminence to wish to take into benevolent consideration the desire already manifested by me to confer on the present vicar apostolic of Changanacherry, Msgr. Thomas Kurialacherry (personally the most suitable for the dignity of archbishop), I would dare say as a legitimate reward, the appointment as Assistant to the Papal Throne with a decree contemporaneous with the constitution of hierarchy.

3. As regards the vigorous and repeated appeals of the vicar apostolic of Kottayam to obtain (the favour) that his see be erected into an archdiocese or at least into a diocese immediately subjected to the Holy See, I would not have anything to add to what I had already reported to the S. Congregation on the subject.<sup>41</sup>

Bowed to the kiss of the sacred purple, I have the honour to profess myself with profound veneration,

Of Your Most Reverend Eminence, most humble and most devout servant,

✠ P. Pisani, Archbishop of Constantia, Apostolic Delegate in the East Indies.

#### **4. Decisions of the Plenary Meeting of the Oriental Congregation on 3 december 1923**

*On the basis of the Report of Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli and the Summary of documents, after evaluating all aspects of the question, the cardinals unanimously expressed their favourable opinion concerning the erection of Syro-Malabar hierarchy with Ernakulam as metropolitan see. The plenary assembly rejected Chualaparambil's repeated requests for the grant of a special status to the vicariate of Kottayam and made it a normal suffragan diocese of the archdiocese of Ernakulam.*

In the general meeting of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church held on 3 December 1923, in which were present the most eminent and the most reverend Fathers Cardinals Vico,

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<sup>41</sup> [Cf. doc. 2.9 & 2. 12.].

Van Rossum, Scapinelli, Tacci Secretary, Bonzano, Gasquet and Ehrle, = On the Constitution of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy for the Syro-Malabarians, = to the DOUBTS:

1. Whether it is fitting to erect the Syro-Malabar vicariates apostolic into residential sees.

*If affirmative:* 2. Whether it is fitting to leave all of them immediately subjected to the Holy See.

*If negative:* 3. Whether and which of the dioceses to be erected, is fitting to be chosen as metropolitan see.

*If affirmative:* 4. Whether it is fitting to declare the Southist diocese of Kottayam immediately subjected to the Holy See.

5. Whether and what other provisions are fitting to be adopted.

Most Eminent Bonzano being referent, in the place of most Eminent Vannutelli, they decided to be responded as follows:

To the first, affirmative.

To the second, negative.

To the third, affirmative, with see in Ernakulam.

To the fourth, negative.

To the fifth, affirmative and according to the mind (*et ad mentem*).

The *mens* is: 1. Let it be inculcated the compilation of a scheme of a synod to be submitted to the Holy See for approval.

2. Let the necessary liturgical books be edited submitting them to the previous approval of the S. Congregation.

3. As regards the attributions of the metropolitan archbishop, let the provisions of the new *Code of Canon Law* be followed,<sup>42</sup> with appropriate adjustments (*congrua congruis referendo*).

This is so.

Lord Card. Bonzano.

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<sup>42</sup> [The Code of Canon Law in force at that time was evidently CIC 1917].

## 5. Apostolic Constitution *Romani Pontifices* Erecting the Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church

*In accordance with the decisions of the plenary assembly of the Oriental Congregation, with the apostolic constitution Romani Pontifices of 21 December 1923 Pope Pius XI constituted the Syro-Malabar hierarchy with Ernakulam as archdiocese and Changanacherry, Trichur and Kottayam as suffragan dioceses. Despite repeated and insistent requests, the vicariate apostolic of Kottayam was constituted as a normal suffragan diocese of the archdiocese of Ernakulam, without granting it any special status like its immediate subjection to the Holy See. Although we have already published the apostolic constitution Romani Pontifices,<sup>43</sup> we have decided to reproduce the same text for the sake of completion. In fact, all other documents we have presented in this book simply narrate the background story of the historic event, namely the constitution of Syro-Malabar hierarchy.*

Pius Bishop, Servant of the servants of God, for perpetual memory.

The Roman Pontiffs, who at all times so inflexibly, sensibly and strictly defended the integrity of the faith and morals, but on the other hand willingly permitted each individual Church to preserve its own rites and liturgy, always loved the Oriental Churches with a particular affection.

The Syro-Malabar Church too, no less than other Churches, experienced this affection of our predecessors in as much it received many benefits from the Holy See.

Indeed quite rightly so, for that Church holds a noble position among the Oriental Churches because it traces its origin back to the most ancient Christian communities which received the light of the Gospel from the Apostle Thomas. For that Apostle, as ancient literary records testify, after Christ ascended into Heaven, preached the Gospel in the regions bordering on India and finally settled his

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<sup>43</sup> [P. Pallath, *Important Roman Documents concerning the Catholic Church in India*, 206-219].

abode in the Indian peninsula, where, as Pope Leo XIII of happy memory, our most wise predecessor records in the apostolic letter *Humanae salutis auctor*, given in Rome on 1 September 1886, "after undertaking a very arduous journey, attended with most serious hardships, he was the first to enlighten those peoples with the light of Christian truth, and after having rendered the testimony of his blood to the supreme Pastor of souls, he was called away to his everlasting reward in heaven".

Yet the memory of the Apostle, even after his glorious death, still remained in India. With regard to this our same predecessor in the aforementioned apostolic letter writes thus: "from that time onwards India never altogether ceased to honour this deserving Apostle; the name and praises of Thomas were wont to be celebrated in the most ancient books of liturgical prayers as well as in other monuments of those Churches and in the course of centuries, even after the lamentable diffusion of errors, his memory was by no means obliterated. In the same way, the faith which he had disseminated, although it lay moribund, did not seem to be completely extinct".

The fame of the preaching and martyrdom of Thomas has particularly been related to the Syro-Malabar region. The Christian faithful who inhabit that region have always been called "the Christians of Saint Thomas", by which appellation, it is worth noting that, only in India they (the faithful) have been distinguished, and there exist among them many ancient temples (churches) dedicated to the same Apostle, and very many Christian faithful are found who bestow the name Thomas upon their children at baptism.

And thus, although the Syro-Malabarians were separated from the Apostolic See both on account of the circumstances of time and the great distance of places, which rendered communications with the Western world extremely difficult for so many centuries, it never entirely lost the Christian faith.

So it came about that the first missionaries who arrived in India in the sixteenth century found among the inhabitants of the Malabar region, who were preserving the Christian faith, albeit

languishing, "the good earth", highly suitable to receive the Word of God which they sowed.

With God's help, both those first missionaries and others who followed in their footsteps afterwards moved into the same region and reaped the greatly desired fruits of their endeavours.

Day by day the number of Syro-Malabar Christians who embraced the Catholic doctrine and communion with the Roman See increased.

In the course of time those Christians manifested so great testimonies of their faith and devotion to the Chair of Peter that in 1887 our predecessor Leo XIII of happy memory, taking particular care of the Catholics of the Syro-Malabar rite, in order to reward in some way their faith, obedience and devotion to the Apostolic See and in order that the true Church of Christ might increase among them day by day, by means of the brief *Quod iampridem* given on 20 May, after a ritual separation of the Syro-Malabar Catholics had been made from the Latin Christians, disunited them from the Church of Verapoly to which they had been annexed and constituted two vicariates apostolic for them which were to be committed to Latin bishops, who were each to appoint a Syro-Malabar vicar general and four other ecclesiastics of the same nation and rite, and should have made use of their advice in all ecclesiastical affairs.

On that occasion two vicariates apostolic were established for the Syro Malabar faithful, conforming to the territorial division effected by the course of the river Alwaye: one in the north with the ordinary residence in the city of Trichur, from which the vicariate itself was called Trichur, the other in the south with the ordinary residence in the city of Kottayam from which the vicariate derived its own name, that is Kottayam.

In the year 1896 our same predecessor Pope Leo XIII, after he had considered the circumstances of times and places, "in order to manifest a new proof of our benevolence towards the Syro-Malabar Church and to provide for the spiritual benefit of the faithful of those regions" by the brief *Quae rei sacrae*, given on 18 July, after he had effected a new division of the entire region,



constituted three vicariates apostolic for the Syro-Malabarians immediately dependent on the Holy See, namely the vicariates of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry, whose territories he wished to have the same extension, that is, as far as those of the two former vicariates, namely Trichur and Kottayam. In this same brief he accurately defined the boundaries of each of the new vicariates. What is worth noting is that it marks the beginning of an ecclesiastical hierarchy entrusted to the bishops of the same people and rite, as the same supreme Pontiff himself decided and took care to set over the three new vicariates apostolic, which we have mentioned above, three bishops chosen from the Syro-Malabar people and rite itself.

In the year 1911 our predecessor Pope Pius X of happy memory, benignly accepting the supplications made to the Apostolic See by the three Syro-Malabar vicars apostolic and after due consideration of the matter, by means of the brief *In Universi Christiani* given on 29 August of the same year, dismembered all the parishes and the churches from the two vicariates apostolic of Ernakulam and Changanacherry, belonging to the Southist people, as they are called, and constituted them into a new vicariate apostolic with its residence in the city of Kottayam, which was therefore to be called Kottayam. From that time began the status of the Malabar Church, which remains until today, namely the division of that Christianity into four vicariates apostolic: Trichur, Ernakulam, Changanacherry and Kottayam.

From the day on which the Christian faithful of the Syro-Malabar rite obtained bishops of their own rite and nation, they have made every sort of beneficial progress. For, not only has the number of religious vocations has increased among them and a large number of conversions taken place, but also religious institutions, catechumenates, schools, religious houses, churches and oratories have incremented, so much so that it is abundantly clear how wisely and diligently the bishops of the Syro-Malabar nation govern the flock entrusted to them. Therefore, at present the sentence of the apostolic delegates in the East Indies has been concordant that the Syro-Malabar Christian communities are to be considered by far among the better ones in the whole of India.

It is therefore just and fair to consider what the faithful, priests and especially the bishops of the Syro-Malabar rite have often and earnestly entreated from the Holy See, namely that a perfect and stable ecclesiastical constitution should be granted to that Church, which has very great strength to protect the discipline of Christian life and to effect the salvation of people.

Wherefore having before our eyes the outstanding symmetry of Catholic affairs among the Syro-Malabar Christian faithful, and their morals truly agreeing with the profession of Christian faith, their singular devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and their very deep reverence towards the clergy, bishops and above all towards this Apostolic See, after obtaining the sentence of our beloved sons, the cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, appointed to the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church, who unanimously expressed the view that the constitution of an ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar rite should at last be achieved, we have decreed that those requests made to us must be approved.

Therefore, having supplied for the consent, as far as necessary, of those whom it concerns or those who presume it to be of concern, by the fullness of our apostolic power, we constitute the four Syro-Malabar vicariates apostolic into so many residential sees, of which one, namely that of Ernakulam, we promote and raise to the rank and dignity of metropolitan Church thus granting to it, and to its bishops, every single right, privilege, honour and prerogative, which belongs to them by common law and according to legitimate prescriptions and lawful customs of the Syro-Malabar Church, but especially the faculty for archbishops to use the pallium according to liturgical laws after having asked for it beforehand in a sacred consistory.

We likewise promote to the rank and dignity of cathedral Churches (dioceses), the three other sees, namely those of Changanacherry, Trichur and Kottayam, and we grant to them and their bishops, the rights, privileges, honours and prerogatives which belong to them by common law and according to the legitimate prescriptions and lawful customs of the Syro-Malabar Church. And these cathedral Churches and their bishops, we constitute suffragans to the metropolitan Church of Ernakulam.

The boundaries, both of the archdiocese of Ernakulam and of the dioceses of Changanacherry, Trichur and Kottayam, shall be the same as hitherto belonged to each of the vicariates apostolic, now promoted to residential sees.

As regards the rights and obligations of clerics and faithful, as well as the government of both the archdiocese and the dioceses, in case of a vacancy and other similar matters, we order the observance of what the sacred canons and the lawful customs of the Syro-Malabar Church determine and prescribe.

It will then be the responsibility of the archbishop of Ernakulam and the bishops of Changanacherry, Trichur and Kottayam to choose the more suitable church in the cities of Ernakulam, Changanacherry, Trichur and Kottayam, in which should be set up the see and cathedra, whether of the archbishop or of the bishop. And therefore from now on we raise those churches to the rank and dignity whether of metropolitan church or of cathedrals; and we order at the same time to keep those churches as parochial in the future as well, if they have hitherto been parochial.

We wish and decide that the present letter and whatever is contained in it, also because any of those whom it concerns or those who presume it to be of concern, have not been heard or have not consented to the aforementioned matters, even if deserving express, specific and particular mention, cannot be censured, impugned or brought into controversy at any time, by defect of subreption or deception, or by defect of nullity or of our intention or by any other defect even if a substantial and not thought-out one, but this letter, which has been prepared and emanated with a sure knowledge and from the plenitude of power, is and will be perpetually valid and will obtain and maintain its complete and full effect and it shall be inviolably observed by all those whom it concerns; and it is and will be certainly null and void, if anyone shall presume to do otherwise over these matters, by any authority, knowingly or unknowingly.

After having constituted these matters as is described above, we appoint our Apostolic Delegate in the East Indies for the execution of all such provisions, granting him, therefore, all the

necessary and opportune faculties, even of sub-delegating, as to the effect of the matter concerned, another man constituted in ecclesiastical office or dignity, and of pronouncing definitive sentence on any difficulty or opposition which may arise in the act of execution and of sending to the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church, after the task having been accomplished, within six months from the date of this letter, an authentic exemplar of the completed execution of our present mandate.

Finally we wish the same faith which would be given to this letter, if the original were exhibited or shown, must be accorded to the transcriptions of this letter, but signed by any public notary and sealed by anyone constituted in ecclesiastical dignity.

Notwithstanding as far as it is necessary, regulations promulgated in synods as well as in provincial, general and universal councils, special or general constitutions and apostolic ordinances, and whatsoever other dispositions of our predecessors the Roman Pontiffs and whatsoever else to the contrary.

Let it be unlawful for anyone to infringe upon or contradict the provisions which have been decreed in this letter of erection, elevation, statute, mandate, derogation, and of our will.

If anyone, however, by any temerarious act, should presume to attempt such a thing, let him know that he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of his blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, on 21 December 1923, the second year of our Pontificate.

## **PART TWO**

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### **ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS**

In the second part the same documents are reproduced in the original language with the same number and the same English heading in order to facilitate consultation.



Anno 1923. - N. 9. SORIANI-MALABAR. Prot. N. 10807.

**SACRA CONGREGAZIONE  
PRO ECCLESIA ORIENTALI**

**PONENTE**

**L'Eminentissimo e Reverendissimo Signor Cardinale  
VINCENZO VANNUTELLI**

**RELAZIONE CON SOMMARIO**

**Sulla costituzione della Gerarchia Ecclesiastica  
per i Siro-Malabaresi**

Novembre 1923.

**ROMA**  
**Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana**

# 1. Report of Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli, Presented to the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for the Oriental Church on 3 December 1923

Eñi e Rñi Signori,

1. - Nel 1886 con la Bolla «*Humanae salutis Auctor*» Leone XIII istituiva la Gerarchia Cattolica nelle Indie ed elevava il Vicariato Apostolico latino di Verapoli a Sede Arcivescovile, aggiungendogli tutte le cristianità del cosiddetto Rito Soriano le quali, dal tempo di Clemente VIII, cioè dall'epoca del Sinodo di Diamper erano sotto la giurisdizione straordinaria dell'Arcivescovo di Goa.

Costituita la Gerarchia nell'India, si acuirono sempre più le agitazioni dei Soriani del Malabar per avere Vescovi del loro Rito, e le medesime cominciarono anche ad apparire più giustificate pel fatto che molte delle diocesi indiane recentemente create non contavano più di 5-7-10 mila anime, mentre i Soriani cattolici sommarono già fin d'allora a circa 260.000.

2. - In seguito pertanto alle favorevoli relazioni dell'allora Delegato Apostolico Mons. A. Agliardi che confermavano quanto, nel 1877, già aveva constatato il Visitatore Apostolico Mons. Ignazio Persico, la S. C. di Propaganda, nella Generale Adunanza del 20 dicembre 1886, decideva di separare l'amministrazione ecclesiastica dei Malabaresi di Rito Soriano da quella dei latini, erigendo per i soriani due Vicariati Apostolici da affidarsi però a Vescovi latini.

Col Breve «*Quod iam pridem*» 29 maggio 1887 venivano così eretti per i Soriani del Malabar due Vicariati Apostolici uno settentrionale con residenza in *Trichur* (affidato a Mons. Medlycott) l'altro meridionale con residenza in Kottayam (affidato a Mons. Lavigne S. J.)<sup>44</sup>, separati con sola divisione rituale dall'arcidiocesi di Verapoli nel cui territorio si estendevano, e con divisione territoriale fra loro, limite il fiume Alway.

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<sup>44</sup> Il quale, di sua autorità, stabiliva poi la sede in Changanacherry.



3. - Persistendo però il movimento e moltiplicandosi le domande dei Soriani per avere vescovi del loro Rito, e le medesime trovando ormai in Roma autorevoli patroni (quali l'Eñmo Card. Ignazio Persico che Visitatore Apostolico del Malabar nel 1877 era stato il primo a prospettare la necessità di aderire in qualche modo alle insistenti aspirazioni dei Soriani e Mons. (poi Eñmo) A. Agliardi, già Delegato Apostolico, per merito delle cui relazioni nel 1886 era stata fatta la sopraccennata separazione dei Soriani dall'amministrazione ecclesiastica dei latini) nella Generale Adunanza del 23 marzo 1896, la S. C. de Propaganda decideva di elevare a tre il numero dei Vicariati Apostolici Soriani e di affidarne la cura a *Vescovi titolari del loro Rito e Nazione i quali fossero immediatamente soggetti alla S. Sede.*

Col Breve «Quae rei sacrae» 28 luglio 1896 soppressi i due Vicariati creati nell'87, se ne erigevano tre *Trichur - Ernakulam - Changanacherry* facendo fra essi una precisa ripartizione di parrocchie ed affidandoli a Vescovi titolari del Rito: *Trichur* a Monsignor Menacherry; *Ernakulam* a Mons. Pareparambil; *Changanacherry* a Mons. Makil (suddista).

4. - Ma, mentre nei due Vicariati Apostolici di Trichur e di Ernakulam parve così stabilita la pace, in quello di Changanacherry, che era stato affidato ad un vescovo suddista, si manifestavano vivi e persistenti dissidi a causa delle due caste o meglio razze dei Nordisti e Suddisti<sup>45</sup>, ciascuna delle quali, ma specialmente quella nordista, male sopporta di essere soggetta ad un vescovo dell'altra nazionalità.

Onde porre termine a tali dissenzioni nella Generale Adunanza dal 31 luglio 1911 venne deciso di smembrare dal Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry ed anche da quello di

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<sup>45</sup> Secondo quanto è diffusamente esposto nella Ponenza luglio 1911, la distinzione fra questi due gruppi, piuttosto che di casta sarebbe propriamente di razza o nazionalità. Vedasi in Sommario p. 20 alcune note estratte dalla detta ponenza. Però Sua Eccellenza Rñna. Mons. Zaleski sostiene trattarsi veramente di caste e il suo giudizio è pure condiviso dall'attuale Delegato Apostolico Mons. P. Pisani.

Vedasi anche .Sommario, pag. 49.

Ernakulam tutte le parrocchie e chiese suddiste e di erigere con esse in Kottayam un nuovo Vicariato Apostolico esclusivamente per i Suddisti. Decisione che approvata dal S. Padre Pio X di s. m. veniva resa esecutiva col Breve «In universi Christiani» del 29 agosto 1911, e colla stessa data veniva trasferito al nuovo Vicariato l'allora Vicario Apostolico di Changanacherry Mons. Matteo Makil, eleggendo in suo luogo Mons. Kurialacherry che vi è ancora attualmente.

5. - Si iniziava così per i Soriani cattolici del Malabar la situazione ecclesiastica attuale: Tre Vicariati Apostolici nordisti, con limiti territoriali e giurisdizione solo personale Trichur, Changanacherry, Ernakulam, e uno per i suddisti, con sede in Kottayam. - Questi quattro Vicariati trovansi tutti nel perimetro dell'Archidiocesi latina di Verapoli. Fuori del territorio di tale diocesi vi è la sola chiesa soriana di Aleppey che appartiene al Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry e trovasi nel territorio della diocesi latina di Cochin.

Quanto a dipendenza civile: La maggior parte del territorio di questi Vicariati è nel regno di Travancore.

Il Vicariato di Changanacherry e di Kottayam sono completamente in territorio di Travancore; quello di Ernakulam è in territorio di Travancore, Cochin ed English Cochin, quello di Trichur è tutto nello stato di Cochin.

Gli attuali Vicari Apostolici, disponendoli secondo il numero dei fedeli, quale è dato dal quadro statistico di Mons. Pisani (V. Somm. pag. 4) sono:

in *Changanacherry* Mons. Tommaso Kurialacherry, Vescovo titolare di Pella, ex alunno del Pont. Collegio Urbano, eletto, come si è detto, nel 1911;

in *Trichur* Mons. Francesco Vazhapilly, Vescovo titolare di Filadelfia eletto nell'aprile 1921;

in *Ernakulam* Mons. Agostino Kandathil Vescovo titolare di Arad, nominato coadiutore cum iure successionis nell'Agosto 1911, succeduto a Mons. Pareparambil nel dicembre 1919;

in *Kottayan* Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambail Vescovo titolare di Busiris eletto nel luglio 1914.

6. - Il provvedimento che ora si propone alla decisione dell'EE. VV. RR<sup>me</sup> è la tanto invocata erezione della gerarchia, o almeno la elevazione dei presenti Vicariati Apostolici in sedi residenziali.

Fin dal 1908, prima ancora che venisse eretto il Vicariato Apostolico suddista, Mons. Ladislao Zaleski, allora Delegato Apostolico delle Indie, esortava la S. C. de Propaganda ad erigere in diocesi i detti Vicariati Apostolici. Egli, che un tempo era pur stato contrario alla creazione dei Vicariati Apostolici del Rito, nell'aprile 1908, trovandosi in Roma, scriveva alla S. « ... nei già decorsi 12 anni di esperienza i Vescovi indigeni (Soriani) si sono mostrati capaci ed anche non inferiori a più di un Vescovo europeo, la elevazione pertanto di tali Vicariati a diocesi residenziali oramai si impone perchè la posizione di Vicari Apostolici mette questi Vescovi in una condizione d'inferiorità davanti agli altri Vescovi dell'India meridionale tutti residenti e questa inferiorità li scoraggisce ed è anche risentita dal clero; tanto più che questi tre Vicariati<sup>46</sup> non solo sono i più importanti di tutte le diocesi dell'India, ma hanno anche una organizzazione più sviluppata e più vicina a quella normale che non le altre diocesi della Delegazione».

Lo stesso Delegato, in una lettera che inviava poi da Mangalore nel dicembre 1908, esponendo il progresso, fatto da quei Vicariati dopo la concessione dei Vescovi titolari del rito, validamente sosteneva l'opportunità di erigerli in diocesi, dicendo essere questa una questione di giustizia, dato il confronto colle diocesi indiane (Sommario, pag. 21 e seg.).

7. - Le cose però rimasero in sospeso perchè, chiesto parere all'Arcivescovo di Verapoli d'allora, Monsignor Bernardo Arguizonis dei Carmelitani, egli rispose che, a suo giudizio, prima di concedere la gerarchia ai Soriani, dovessero i medesimi avere i loro libri liturgici e possedere un codice in cui fossero chiaramente

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<sup>46</sup> Allora non era ancora eretto il Vicariato Suddista.

determinate le norme disciplinari a cui i siro malabaresi sono tenuti.

Tale proposta venne allora in parte fatta propria dalla S. C. che, in data 26 agosto 1909, scriveva a Mons. Zaleski perchè insistesse presso i Vicariati Apostolici affinchè portassero a termine la versione del Pontificale (dal latino in Soriano) incominciata da Mons. Menacherry, e li esortasse inoltre perchè, valendosi delle norme già sancite dal Sinodo di Diamper ed adattandole con opportune modificazioni ai tempi attuali, compilassero sotto la direzione del Delegato Apostolico uno schema di Sinodo, da sottoporsi poi alla revisione della S. Sede, stabilendo così il diritto proprio della Chiesa Soriana.

Tali suggerimenti però, per varie ragioni, non ottennero l'effetto sperato. Ancora oggi i Vescovi Soriani, seguendo l'antica consuetudine locale; conferiscono gli ordini ed anche la Cresima servendosi del Pontificale Romano, nè ancora hanno compilato lo schema di Sinodo suggerito dalla S. C.

8. - Ciononostante, la buona organizzazione e il consolante andamento raggiunti dai Vicariati Malabaresi dopo oltre un quarto di secolo che i medesimi vennero affidati a Vescovi del rito, giustificano largamente le insistenti domande perchè non si ritardi più oltre ad erigerli in diocesi residenziali. Tanto più che, secondo il giudizio dell'attuale Delegato Apostolico, la costituzione di quei Vicariati in Diocesi ed in Gerarchia è quasi condizione indispensabile, perchè i loro Ordinari possano radunarsi e presentare in concreto uno schema di Codice Canonico, quale è desiderato da loro e suggerito dalla S. Sede.

Il giudizio sopra espresso dal Rmo Mons. Zaleski essere cioè i detti Vicariati Apostolici da annoverarsi tra le migliori diocesi dell'India, venne pure in seguito condiviso dal Delegato Apostolico Mons. Fumasoni Biondi, come lo è dall'attuale Revmo Delegato Mons. Pietro Pisani. Non sembrerebbe quindi doversi attendere oltre ad elevare questi Vicariati alla dignità di diocesi residenziali, anche perchè, sul principio dell'anno venturo dovrà tenersi a Bangalore un *Concilio Plenario*, al quale, saranno pure invitati i presenti Vicari Apostolici Siro Malabaresi che già nel

1921 presero viva parte alla conferenza plenaria dell'Episcopato delle Indie Orientali. Tornerebbe pertanto sconveniente dovesse ripetersi, in tale occasione, quello che il Reño Mons. Zaleski dice avere a suo tempo deplorato, che cioè i Vescovi Soriani essendo solo Vicari, debbano sedere gli ultimi, mentre, per il numero dei loro diocesani ed anche per l'organizzazione dei loro Vicariati essi sono superiori alla maggior parte dei Vescovi indiani (Vedasi in Sommario pag. 1, Nota statistica comparativa ricavata dal «The catholic Directory of India, Burna and Ceylon 1923»).

Inoltre, l'organizzazione gerarchica di quelle Chiese è reclamata dai membri di quel clero, perchè pare ad essi che la creazione di un metropolitano servirà a riunirli con più stretto vincolo, per modo che essi «potranno, *viribus unitis*, agire più validamente nella tutela dei loro diritti religiosi e civili presso governi che, anche colà, molte cose introducono che sono contrarie alla cristiana educazione della gioventù, alla santità del matrimonio, ecc.». Vedi Petizione dei sacerdoti di Ernakulam (Sommario pag. 31).

Dice poi Mons. Pisani che il dare la gerarchia ai Siro-Malabaresi servirà anche a nobilitare i cattolici davanti ai Giacobiti i quali loro rinfacciano spesso come siano governati da soli Vicari Apostolici, quasi infedeli convertiti.

9. - Al quesito pertanto se sia opportuno accedere alle insistenti domande dei Vicari Apostolici Siro Malabaresi per avere la Gerarchia, i Delegati Apostolici, Mons. Zaleski (Delegato dal 1892-1916) Monsignor Fumasoni Biondi (Delegato 1916-1919), Monsignor Pietro Pisani Delegato attuale hanno risposto e più volte affermativamente.

Mons. Zaleski riconfermando in una risposta alla S. C. in data 27 giugno 1922 quanto già aveva detto nelle sue relazioni del 1908-1909 soggiunge: «Non ho mai potuto capire la ragione perchè si esitava per tanto tempo ad accondiscendere a questa giusta ed opportuna domanda dei Vescovi Soriani. È una cosa che avrebbe dovuto essere fatta già 10 anni fa. Di tutte le diocesi dell'India i suddetti Vicariati sono quelli che si avvicinano di più alla sistemazione normale della Chiesa, con clero che differisce

poco da quello europeo, e numerosi cristiani d'indole un poco turbolenta, ma profondamente cattolici. Io non esito perciò di rispondere al quesito: *Affirmative*». (Vedi Sommario pag. 41, n. 1). E in un successivo ufficio aggiunge: «Non solo è conveniente, ma anche necessario, giusto ed opportuno» (Sommario pag. 44).

*Mons. Fumasoni Biondi* trasmettendo ancora ultimamente da Washington copia di lettera indirizzata a lui, su tale argomento, dai Vicari Apostolici di Kottayam e di Ernackulam scriveva : «I quattro Vicari Apostolici Siro Malabaresi Mons. Vazhapilly di Trichur, Mons. Kandathil di Ernackulam, Mons. Kurialacherry di Changanacherry, Mons. Chulaparambil di Kottayam domandano con insistenza da qualche anno che vengano nominati vescovi, e che uno tra loro sia l'Arcivescovo. Il Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam desidera restare immediatamente soggetto alla Santa Sede e non al futuro Arcivescovo. Si avrebbe quindi un Arcivescovo con due Vescovi suffraganei per ora, e l'altro immediatamente soggetto. Se devo dire la mia opinione come antico Delegato Apostolico delle Indie Orientali, mi sembra che *il loro desiderio è del tutto legittimo*. I presenti Vicari Apostolici sono zelanti, capaci, animati dalle migliori intenzioni. Soprattutto Mons. Agostino Kandathil di Ernackulam, ex alunno del Seminario di Kandy, formato alla scuola della tribolazione negli anni che fu coadiutore di Mons. Pareparambil è uomo veramente dotto, zelante e pio».

L'attuale Delegato *Mons. P. Pisani*, inviando alla S. C. altre nuove insistenze dei Vicari Ap. le ha più volte raccomandate e ultimamente ancora, con dati statistici raccolti dai 4 Vicariati, ha compilato un prospetto che si acclude in Sommario e dal quale L'E<sup>EE</sup>ñze V. Rev<sup>me</sup> possono rendersi conto del progresso fatto dal Cattolicesimo fra i Soriani dalla data della concessione dei Vescovi del rito - 1896 - fino al 1921. - Tale statistica è una valida raccomandazione per l'invocata creazione delle diocesi (Somm., p. 2 e seguenti).

10. - Quanto però alla designazione della *sede metropolitana* non sono più così concordi i pareri. L'attuale Delegato Apostolico, come già Mons. Fumasoni Biondi propongono *Changanacherry* perchè è questo il Vicariato più importante per numero di fedeli

(nella sola città oltre 10.000) per numero di clero (254 sac., 104 seminaristi) per istituti educativi e opere sociali e benefiche. (Vedi Sommario N. XI, pag. 37; N. XII, pag. 39, Lettere di Mons. Fumasoni e Mons. Pisani).

Mons. Zaleschi invece, nel voto che si è compiaciuto redigere circa l'erigenda Gerarchia (Sommario N. XIII, pag.41) dice che «*Ernakulam* s'impone da sè per sede metropolitana, perchè città di grande avvenire che diventerà uno dei porti principali dell'Indie e che oggi già si può dire la città principale, metropoli del Malabar».

Ernakulam, capitale del piccolo regno di Coccino per la posizione centrale e per le ottime comunicazioni è certo la più importante città del Malabar; se gli Inglesi poi riusciranno ad attuare il progetto del nuovo porto, esso sarà senza dubbio uno dei più importanti dell'India.

Notisi che il Vicariato Apostolico di Ernakulam ha pure alcune parrocchie in regno di Travancore.

All'obbiezione fatta da Mons. Fumasoni (p. 37) che «in Ernakulam a pochi metri di distanza dalla residenza del Vicariato Apostolico trovasi la residenza dell'Arcivescovo latino di Verapoli con più di 4000 cattolici latini nella città, ed al suo avviso che non sembrerebbe perciò conveniente che nella città stessa vi sia anche l'Arcivescovo Soriano». Altri potrebbe opporre che tale fatto può anzi essere una ragione favorevole per l'affidamento e la buona intesa che conviene si mantenga tra latini e soriani conviventi sul medesimo territorio, e perchè è fuor di dubbio che tutti i Soriani e non solo quei di Ernakulam insisterebbero ad ogni modo perchè il loro Vescovo, in tale importante centro, non sia inferiore in dignità all'Arcivescovo latino.

11. - Non si è stimato opportuno, circa la designazione della sede metropolitana, domandare il parere dei singoli Vicari Apostolici, perchè si presume che essi non avrebbero aggiunto informazioni rilevanti oltre quelle che sono state date dai tre Delegati Apostolici, e perchè, data l'indole dei Soriani, si è ritenuto essere cosa prudente non fare richieste che potrebbero suscitare le troppo facili emulazioni locali e portare alla questione più confusione che luce. Tanto più che, a parte le insistenze del Vicario

Apostolico suddista di Kottayam, di cui si sta per dire, gli altri Vicarii Apostolici si sono per questo pienamente rimessi al giudizio della S. C. Vedasi in proposito il consiglio di Mons. Zeleski (Sommario pag. 44, n. 3). E vedasi la petizione dei sacerdoti di Changanacherri (Sommario pag. 27).

Sembra pertanto che, circa la sede metropolitana, il problema consista nel decidere se sia da preferirsi *Ernakulam* in vista della maggiore importanza che, sotto l'aspetto civile, tale città già ha presentemente e che, con ogni probabilità, andrà acquistando ancor più, e rapidamente, in appresso; oppure se sia preferibile *Changanacherry* città abbastanza importante e ricca, quantunque non grande e di poco facili comunicazioni, la quale però al presente, è sede del Vicariato Apostolico più numeroso per fedeli e maggiormente dotato d'istituzioni Cattoliche.

12. - Se pertanto le EE. VV. stimeranno conveniente, come pare, non solo erigere i presenti Vicariati in sedi residenziali, ma designare anche subito l'Arcivescovo del rito, occorrerà in questo caso che risolvano eziandio quale posizione debba farsi al Vicario Apostolico suddista di Kottayam: se annoverarlo fra le sedi suffraganee o crearlo diocesi immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede.

Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambil, con numerose lettere indirizzandosi ora al Delegato Apostolico, ora alla S. C., ora al già Delegato Mons. Fumasoni B., ed anche direttamente al S. Padre (nella visita che fece ad limina l'anno passato in occasione del Congresso Eucaristico): insistentemente ha supplicato e supplica perchè, nella eventuale erezione della gerarchia Siro Malabarese, il Vicariato suddista sia creato diocesi immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede. Egli anzi vorrebbe che la sede di Kottayam venisse eretta in sede metropolitana a sè, senza suffraganei; o almeno che il suo Vescovo fosse nominato Arcivescovo titolare.

A conforto delle sue insistenti petizioni Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambil reca quelle ragioni stesse che vennero prese in considerazione dagli EE. VV. nel 1911 nell'erigere un Vicariato distinto per i suddisti.



Tali ragioni possono tutte riassumersi in una: la netta separazione, direbbesi rivalità esistente da secoli tra le due caste, ovvero nazionalità, dei Nordisti (oltre 450.000) e suddisti (al più 35.000) per cui, ciascuna malamente sopporterebbe di essere assoggettata ad un Vescovo dell'altra nazionalità. Vedasi (Sommario N. XVI, pag.48), Lettera inviata dai tre Vicariati Apost. nel 1911 ed allegata ora del Vicario Apostolico Suddista a prova della sua domanda.

13. - Qui però deve essere notato che, le ragioni per le quali i Nordisti disdegnano sottostare ad un Vescovo suddista, non hanno forse eguale valore quando trattisi del contrario, cioè della dipendenza di suddisti da un nordista: per testimonianza dei Delegati Apostolici è usanza nel Malabar accettata e pacificata che i nordisti coprano cariche civili con autorità anche sui suddisti; mentre pare non sia ugualmente tollerato il contrario.

Motivo di tale differenza può bene essere il numero incomparabilmente maggiore dei Nordisti ed il concetto che questa *nazionalità* (o casta) sia all'altra superiore.

La situazione poi tutta speciale di malcontento ed ostilità quale si verificava prima del 1911 nel Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry, per esservi al medesimo preposto un Vicario Apostolico suddista (Mons. Makil di s. m., che a quanto pare acuiwa anche un po' personalmente i motivi di tal malcontento, occupandosi un po' troppo degli interessi della sua nazionalità); - stato di cose al quale gli Eminentissimi stimarono opportuno portare un rimedio che si può dire radicale, erigendo uno speciale Vicariato pei suddisti e trasferendovi Mons. Makil; tale situazione non pare davvero debba ripetersi quando si tratti, come al presente, della sola dipendenza del Vescovo suddista da un metropolitano nordista.

Le ragioni pertanto e la speciale situazione di fatto prese in considerazione dagli Eñi nel 1911 non sembra possano con perfetta logica invocarsi ora, dal Revmo Mons. Chulaparambil, a conforto della sua insistente petizione.

14.- Mons. Pisani perciò non appoggia la domanda di Mons. Chulaparambil e nella lettera allegata in Sommario pag. 25 il

Delegato così si esprime: «Le ragioni addotte da Mons. Chulaparambil non mi persuadono. A me pare che la dipendenza dal Metropolitano riguardi direttamente il Suffraganeo, non il clero e i fedeli; e che a soddisfare il legittimo sentimento di indipendenza dei Suddisti, possa bastare la concessione di un Vicariato Apostolico e l'eventuale erezione del medesimo in diocesi, senza pensare ad introdurre nel Malabar due Archidiocesi quando ancora è sospesa ogni decisione circa l'opportunità di averne una». Ed in altra sua lettera (Sommario p. 39) «l'unione di Kottayam ad un Metropolitano comune agli altri Vicariati Apostolici Soriani, se in casi rarissimi (come ad es. per l'appello al tribunale superiore ecclesiastico) potrebbe importare una cotale dipendenza degli interessati da un Ordinario Nordista, non sembra significare alcuna dedizione dell'amor proprio Suddista, come vorrebbe Monsignor Chulaparambil».

Non si arriva perciò a comprendere come mai il Rev<sup>mo</sup> Mons. Chulaparambil possa asserire in una sua lettera che, per tale dipendenza, «i Suddisti non saranno felici sotto un Arcivescovo Nordista» (Protoc. N. 10232).

15.- Il Rev<sup>mo</sup> Mons. Zaleski che a suo tempo è stato contrario alla concessione di un Vescovo con giurisdizione personale per i 30.000 suddisti residenti per la maggior parte nel Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry, perchè stimava tale concessione come un riconoscimento di casta pericoloso in quelle regioni; nel suo voto pag. 42 giudica non doversi accedere alla domanda di fare del piccolo Vicariato di Kottayam una diocesi non soggetta al Metropolitano comune. «Vi sono due alternative: o sottomettere la diocesi di Kottayam alla sede metropolitana, facendo così di tutti i Soriani una sola provincia ecclesiastica, cosa che sarebbe desiderabile; oppure fare la diocesi di Kottayam immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede, cosa poco desiderabile, perchè sarebbe come una nuova approvazione della esclusività della casta, ed accentuerebbe il pericolo col quale la S. Sede avrà un tempo a contare e che può portare alla rovina le più belle comunità cattoliche dell'India», e così vedasi (Sommario pag. 45, n. 5).

16. - Mons. Fumasoni Biondi pare invece favorevole a che la diocesi Suddista di Kottayam venga lasciata immediatamente

soggetta alla S. Sede. In una sua lettera dello scorso anno, mentre trasmetteva alla S. Congregazione una delle insistenze di Monsignor Chulaparambil «Mi arride, egli diceva, l'idea che l'erigenda diocesi di Kottayam venisse dichiarata immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede. Ciò per il fatto deplorabile che Nordisti e Suddisti *non coutuntur*, non sposano tra loro, non mangiano insieme e si questionano la precedenza<sup>47</sup>. Quanto poi a fare Kottayam una sede Arcivescovile senza suffraganei, ammetterei la richiesta quando il numero dei cattolici suddisti per mezzo della conversione dei giacobiti suddisti, si fosse elevato almeno a 100.000 mentre ora tale Vicariato è il più piccolo contando 30.000 fedeli mentre gli altri ne contano ciascuno non meno di 100.000». (Sommario pag. 55).

17. - In data 28 ottobre 1922 Mons. Fumasoni comunicava poi a questa S. C. che, nell'Udienza Pontificia del 23 ottobre, avendo il S. Padre chiesto a lui informazioni circa una lettera lasciata da Mons. Chulaparambil nelle mani di Sua Santità (nella quale lettera chiedesi appunto che nell'erigersi la Gerarchia Siro Malab. la sede di Kottayam sia creata immediatamente soggetta e fatta sede metropolitana senza suffraganei o che almeno il suo Vescovo sia nominato Arcivescovo titolare): il Santo Padre, dopo aver benignamente ascoltato le ragioni a Lui esposte da Mons. Fumasoni, manifestò «che gli arrideva il progetto di creare, quando si tratterà d'istituire la Gerarchia tra i Siro Malabaresi, il Vicariato Apostolico di Kottayam per i Suddisti in *Diocesi* immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede, rimettendo ad altro tempo l'erezione del medesimo Vicariato ad *Arcidiocesi* immediatamente soggetta». (Somm. p. 58).

18. - Qualora le sovraindicate ragioni sembrino sufficienti all'EE. VV. Revme, per non mettere la diocesi Suddista alla dipendenza di un metropolitano nordista e, per altra parte, non giudicassero conveniente fare a questa piccola diocesi una posizione di privilegio, che conforme a quanto dice Mons. Pisani (Sommario pag. 39) forse «si risolverebbe in un segnacolo di divisioni e di animosità anche maggiori fra Nordisti e Suddisti»,

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<sup>47</sup> Ciò non per odio od avversione, ma per costumanza immemorabile.

pare non resterebbe altra via che erigere questi quattro Vicariati Apostolici in sedi residenziali, lasciandoli tutti, per ora, all'immediata dipendenza della S. Sede.

Tale misura però non viene suggerita da nessuno dei Delegati Apostolici, anzi Mons. Zaleski espressamente la riprova. Occorre, egli dice, che «nulla si faccia di straordinario, come per es. quattro diocesi immediatamente soggette alla S. Sede. Occorre procedere come è solita la Chiesa nel caso. Creare cioè una provincia ecclesiastica con un metropolitano». (Sommario pag. 44, n. 2).

Il medesimo Mons. asserisce altrove che, per il maggior prestigio della S. Sede nel Malabar, erigendo quei Vicariati in diocesi, è conveniente assegnare subito il Metropolitano, per modo che i Siro Malabaresi abbiano finalmente la tanto invocata Gerarchia. Tale giudizio è pure condiviso dal Rmo Mons. Pisani.

Se pertanto le Eme Vostre stimeranno opportuno designare senz'altro l'Arcivescovo, pare che molte delle difficoltà sollevate da Mons. Chulaparambil scomparirebbero, qualora venisse scelta a sede metropolitana la città di Ernakulam.

Sembra infatti che il Vescovo suddista abbia una speciale ritrosia a diventare suffraganeo del Vescovo di Changanacherry, per il motivo forse che vi è stata tra loro in passato qualche divergenza, spiegabile del resto col fatto che, questi due Vescovi esercitano giurisdizione personale sopra lo stesso territorio ove l'amministrazione delle parrocchie e chiese suddiste è separata da quella dei nordisti.

19. - Create le diocesi, con regolare dipendenza da un Metropolitano, si potrà pure più facilmente ottenere quello che la S. C. raccomandava fin dal 1909, che cioè i Vescovi Soriani «si radunino regolarmente e compilino quello schema di Sinodo che approvato poi dalla S. Sede costituisca in modo chiaro il diritto consuetudinario della Chiesa Soriana».

Questo sarà senza dubbio un gran passo per il progresso di quelle comunità cristiane la cui situazione, in confronto delle altre diocesi dell'India, è già fin da ora così consolante.

Dopo ciò si propongono all'EE. VV. Revme i seguenti DUBBI:

1°. Se convenga erigere i Vicariati Apostolici Siro Malbaresì in Sedi residenziali.

Quatenus affirmative:

2°. Se convenga lasciarli tutti immediatamente soggetti alla S. Sede.

Quatenus negative:

3°. Se e quale delle erigende diocesi convenga scegliere per la Sede Metropolitana.

Quatenus affirmative :

4°. Se convenga dichiarare la diocesi suddista di Kottayam immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede.

5°. Se e quali altri provvedimenti convenga adottare.



## 2. Sommario (Documenti allegati alla pendenza)

### 2.1. Comparative Statistical Table of the Dioceses in South India (Sum. No. I)

*Quadro statistico comparativo delle diocesi del Sud India e Vicariati Apost. Siro-Malab. Ricavato dal «The Catholic Directory of India, Burma and Ceylan».*

| Diocesi e vicariati apostolici | Cattolici | Percentuali | Sacerdoti indigeni | Sacerdoti europei |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b><i>Siro-Malabaresi.</i></b> |           |             |                    |                   |
| Changanacherri, Vic. Ap.       | 159,024   | 29          | 258                |                   |
| Trichur »                      | 128,605   | 16          | 68                 |                   |
| Ernakulam »                    | 113,936   | 17          | 141                |                   |
| Kottayam »                     | 34,894    | 18          | 30                 |                   |
| <b><i>Latini.</i></b>          |           |             |                    |                   |
| Verapoli, Archidiocesi         | 98,467    | 25          | 50                 | 26                |
| Quilon, Diocesi                | 108,711   | 9           | 60                 | 12                |
| Cochin »                       | 150,989   | 26          | 56                 | 23                |
| Trichinopoli »                 | 278,429   | 9           | 60                 | 124               |
| Coimbatore »                   | 44,014    | 13          | 23                 | 32                |
| Mangalore »                    | 112,000   | 17          | 77                 | 37                |
| Mysore »                       | 56,589    | 12          | 20                 | 47                |
| Madras »                       | 58,246    | 9           | 22                 | 43                |
| Pondichery »                   | 147,710   | 3           | 27                 | 68                |
| Kumbakonam »                   | 103,873   | 8           | 14                 | 35                |
| Mylapore »                     | 82,879    | 14          | 57                 | 20                |
| Goa, Patriarcato               | 325,370   | 3           | 783                | 12                |

## 2.2. Statistical Table of the Four Vicariates Sent by Apostolic Delegate Pisani (Sum. No. II)

*Mons. P. Pisani invia prospetto statistico del progresso fatto dal cattolicesimo nei 4 Vicariati dall'epoca della loro creazione. Seguono note statistiche date dei singoli Vicari Apostolici.*

20 Settembre 1922

Eminenza Reverendissima,

Riferendomi alla venerata lettera di cotesta S. C. in data 5 luglio u. s. N. 8197 ho l'onore di rimettere a Vostra Eminenza Reverendissima la relazione dei Rev<sup>m</sup>i Vicari Apostolici del Malabar circa il progresso fatto dal Cattolicesimo in quelle regioni dopo l'erezione di quei Vicariati.

Allo scopo di agevolare la lettura e di coordinare i risultati ho creduto bene di preparare l'unito quadro statistico necessariamente incompleto per manco di elementi, ma sufficiente, a mio avviso...

Chinato al bacio della S. Porpora ho l'onore di confermarvi con profondo ossequio

di Vostra Eminenza Rev<sup>ma</sup>

umil<sup>mo</sup> dev<sup>mo</sup> servo , † P. Pisani, Arciv. di Costanza,  
Delegato Ap. nelle Indie O.



### Prospetto Statistico

| Diocesi        | Anni    | Chiese, Cappelle | Sacerdoti | Fedeli   | Seminaristi | Seminario | Catecumenati | Neo-convertiti | Rel. Carmelitani | Monasteri | Suore |
|----------------|---------|------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Changanacherry | 1896    | 104              | 200       | 92. 638  | 54          | 1         | 2            | 130            | 34               | 4         | 19    |
|                | 1906    | 130              | 214       | 109. 843 | 60          | 1         | 3            | 400            | 44               | 4         | 60    |
|                | 1916    | 137              | 242       | 130. 500 | 80          | 1         | 15           | 1. 625         | 91               | 4         | 172   |
|                | 1921-22 | 182              | 254       | 159. 000 | 104         | 1         | 18           | 15. 706        | 116              | 5         | 438   |
| Ernakulam      | 1896    | 74               | 114       | 75. 200  | 17          | 0         | 0            | 200            | 25               | 3         | 60    |
|                | 1906    | 104              | 115       | 90. 336  | 39          | 1         | 1            | 3. 000         | 27               | 4         | 97    |
|                | 1916    | 144              | 125       | 107. 490 | 48          | 1         | 3            | 4. 000         | 41               | 4         | 151   |
|                | 1921-22 | 151              | 143       | 113. 936 | 47          | 1         | 14           | 4. 479         | 57               | 4         | 199   |
| Kottayam       | 1896    | —                | —         | —        | —           | —         | —            | —              | —                | —         | —     |
|                | 1906    | —                | —         | —        | —           | —         | —            | —              | —                | —         | —     |
|                | 1916    | 40               | 36        | 32. 000  | 14          | 1         | 2            | 78             | —                | 0         | 31    |
|                | 1921-22 | 44               | 43        | 35. 000  | 16          | 1         | 6            | 145            | —                | 1         | 43    |
| Trichur        | 1896    | 82               | 92        | 70. 472  | 19          | 0         | 1            | —              | 24               | 2         | 12    |
|                | 1906    | 91               | 93        | 97. 620  | 33          | 1         | 2            | —              | 36               | 3         | 140   |
|                | 1916    | 100              | 95        | 118. 768 | 47          | 1         | 4            | —              | 48               | 3         | 290   |
|                | 1921-22 | 104              | 96        | 130. 193 | 57          | 1         | 5            | 205            | 58               | 3         | 303   |

| Diocesi        | Anni    | Conventi | Tipografie | Giornali | Orfanotrofi | Orfani | Collegi | Scuole Superiori | Scuole Inferiori | Alunni  | Convitti |
|----------------|---------|----------|------------|----------|-------------|--------|---------|------------------|------------------|---------|----------|
| Changanacherry | 1896    | 2        | 1          | 2        | —           | —      | 0       | 1                | 7                | 439     | —        |
|                | 1906    | 6        | 1          | 2        | —           | —      | 0       | 3                | 11               | 1. 260  | —        |
|                | 1916    | 7        | 2          | 3        | —           | —      | 0       | 3                | 39               | 4. 915  | —        |
|                | 1921-22 | 23       | 5          | 4        | —           | —      | 1       | 5                | 81               | 8. 815  | —        |
| Ernakulam      | 1896    | 3        | 0          | 0        | 0           | 0      | 0       | 0                | 102              | 4. 290  | 1        |
|                | 1906    | 5        | 1          | 0        | 1           | 17     | 0       | 0                | 184              | 10. 390 | 4        |
|                | 1916    | 7        | 2          | 0        | 1           | 15     | 0       | 1                | 157              | 15. 373 | 7        |
|                | 1921-22 | 9        | 3          | 1        | 3           | 24     | 0       | 1                | 225              | 18. 303 | 11       |
| Kottayam       | 1896    | —        | —          | —        | —           | —      | —       | —                | —                | —       | —        |
|                | 1906    | —        | —          | —        | —           | —      | —       | —                | —                | —       | —        |
|                | 1916    | 3        | 0          | —        | 1           | —      | 0       | 0                | 6                | 2. 170  | 3        |
|                | 1921-22 | 5        | 1          | —        | 1           | —      | 0       | 0                | 24               | 2. 484  | 5        |
| Trichur        | 1896    | 1        | 0          | —        | 0           | —      | 0       | 1                | 154              | 8. 885  | —        |
|                | 1906    | 4        | 0          | —        | 0           | —      | 0       | 3                | 194              | 15. 945 | —        |
|                | 1916    | 7        | 0          | —        | 1           | —      | 0       | 3                | 204              | 23. 055 | —        |
|                | 1921-22 | 9        | 0          | —        | 2           | —      | 1       | 3                | 254              | 24. 625 | —        |

**Osservazioni:**

*La cifra delle conversioni rappresenta il totale avutosi negli anni decorsi da quello segnato nella linea superiore a quello cui si riferisce la cifra.*

*Così per Changanacherry la cifra di 15.706 conversioni segnata per l'anno 1921-22 rappresenta il numero delle conversioni avvenute dal 1916 al 30 giugno 1922, cioè durante sei anni.*

*In tali cifre sono comprese le conversioni dal paganesimo, dal protestantesimo e dello scisma. Il Vicario Apostolico di Trichur non dà il numero delle conversioni. Per l'anno 1921 il Catholic Directory registra un totale di 205.*

**Nota.** - La statistica del *Catholic Directory of India* riguardo al numero dei cattolici siro-melab. di ciascun Vicariato, mentre per Changanacherry ed Ernakulam concorda col quadro sopraesposto per Trichur dava solo il N. 106433. per Kottayam non reca cifre.

### **2.3. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Changanacherry (Sum. No. III)**

Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry, 29 Augusti 1922.

Excellentissime Domine,

Notitiam, per Excellentiae Vestrae literas N. 2503, quaesitam circa progressum huius Vicariatus sub regimine Prelatorum Syromalabaricorum, sequentibus humillime submitto.

Vicariatus hic ultimo anno episcopatus RR. DD. Ep. Caroli Lavigne S. I., amplectebatur tum Ernakulam tum Kottayam. Sub autem episcopatu RR. DD. Mathei Makil, qui regebat hunc Vicariatum ab anno 1896 usque ad 1911, licet excludebatur Ernakulam, tamen includebat Kottayam. Elenchus vero quae subiicitur exhibet res uti sunt et erant sub territorio actuali huius Vicariatus, exclusis scilicet rebus Vicariatus Ernakulam et Kottayam quae actu coniunctae manebant usque annum 1896, secluso pariter Vicariatu Kottayam qui huic unitus erat usque 1911 (postremum annum episcopatus RR. DD. Ep. Mathei Makil.

Tria genera Statisticorum heic submittuntur: Scilicet I. Conditio rerum religionis, II. Conditio rerum saecularis educationis, III. Conditio rerum oeconomicarum.

|  | RES | 1896 | 1906 | 1916 | 1921-22 |
|--|-----|------|------|------|---------|
|--|-----|------|------|------|---------|

## I. – CONDITIO RELIGIONIS.

|     |   |       |        |        |        |
|-----|---|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1.  | Ecclesiae et capellae                         | 104   | 130    | 137    | 182    |
| 2.  | Sacerdotes                                    | 200   | 214    | 242    | 254    |
| 3.  | Fideles                                       | 92638 | 109843 | 130500 | 159000 |
| 4.  | Seminaristae                                  | 54    | 60     | 80     | 104    |
| 5.  | Seminarium (Petit)                            | 1     | 1      | 1      | 1      |
| 6.  | Catechumenatus                                | 2     | 3      | 15     | 18     |
| 7.  | Neo-Conversi                                  | 130   | 400    | 1625   | 15706  |
| 8.  | Religiosi Carmel. <i>cum</i><br>aspiranti bus | 34    | 44     | 91     | 116    |
|     | Eorum Monasteria                              | 4     | 4      | 4      | 5      |
| 9.  | Sorores Carmelitanae                          | 12    | 41     | 77     | 153    |
|     | Earum domus                                   | 1     | 3      | 3      | 9      |
| 10. | Sorores Claristae                             | 7     | 19     | 75     | 142    |
|     | Earum domus                                   | 1     | 3      | 4      | 7      |
| 11. | Sorores Adoratrices                           | 0     | 0      | 20     | 143    |
|     | Earum domus                                   | 0     | 0      | 1      | 7      |
| 12. | Catholica Typographia                         | 1     | 1      | 2      | 5      |
|     | Ephemerides                                   | 2     | 2      | 3      | 4      |

## II. – CONDITIO EDUCATIONIS.

|    |                           |    |     |      |      |
|----|---------------------------|----|-----|------|------|
| 1. | Collegium Academicum      | 0  | 0   | 0    | 1    |
|    | Graduati                  | 2  | 15  | 45   | 150  |
|    | Graduatae                 | 0  | 0   | 3    | 15   |
|    | Catholici Studentes       | 5  | 25  | 140  | 315  |
|    | Catholicae in Collegiis   | 0  | 0   | 15   | 45   |
| 2. | Engl. High. School pueris | 1  | 3   | 3    | 4    |
|    | » » » puellis             | 0  | 0   | 0    | 1    |
|    | Catholici in H. Schools   | 15 | 180 | 300  | 525  |
|    | Catholicae » »            | 0  | 10  | 50   | 85   |
| 3. | Eng. Lower. Sch. pueris   | 2  | 3   | 5    | 8    |
|    | » » » puellis             | 0  | 1   | 1    | 3    |
|    | Catholici in Eng. Low     | 95 | 350 | 1100 | 2850 |
|    | Catholicae » »            | 4  | 20  | 120  | 350  |

|    |  |      |     |      |       |
|----|--|------|-----|------|-------|
| 4. | Vernac. Schol. Recognitae a Gubernio Pueris  | 4    | 4   | 25   | 55    |
|    | Vernac. Schol. Recognitae a Gubernio Puellis | 1    | 3   | 8    | 15    |
|    | Catholici in Vernac. Schol                   | 250  | 550 | 2580 | 4225  |
|    | Catholicae » »                               | 75   | 200 | 765  | 3580  |
| 5. | Fideles illiterate                           | 10 % | 8 % | 5 %  | 4.5 % |

### III – CONDITIO RERUM OECONOMICARUM

|    |                                  |         |         |       |        |
|----|----------------------------------|---------|---------|-------|--------|
| 1. | Fundus Missionis Valoris: Rs.    | 5000    | 5000    | 75000 | 185000 |
| 2. | Proventus fundi Valoris : Rs.    | 150     | 150     | 2500  | 5550   |
| 3. | Contributio 5 % ex Parochis: Rs. | 3500    | 3500    | 5500  | 8500   |
| 4. | Donationes ex Parochiis Rs.      | Nil     | Nil     | 18847 | 8325   |
|    | <b>EXPENSA AD :</b>              |         |         |       |        |
| 1. | CURIAE ETC. SUSTENTATIONEM.      | Ignotum | Ignotum | 5500  | 5600   |
| 2. | EDUCATIONEM ET AEDIFICIA         | »       | »       | 9170  | 19250  |
| 3. | FIDEI PROPAGATIONEM              | »       | »       | 4280  | 6650   |
| 4. | EMPTIONEM PROPRIETATUM           | »       | »       | 21341 | 10974  |
| 5. | FUNDI CULTURAM                   | »       | »       | 2645  | 3597   |
| 6. | VIA DONATIONUM ETC.              | »       | »       | 1899  | 2110   |

Bishop's House, Changanacherry, 29 augusti 1922.

† Thomas Kurialacherry, Bishop Vic. Ap. Changanacherry.

## 2.4. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Ernakulam since 1897 (Sum. No. IV)

Vicariato Apostolico di Ernakulam.

*Relationes de Statu Vicariatus Apostolici Ernakulamensis ab Anno 1897*

| Annus                                  | 1897(a) | 1901   | 1911      | Ianuario<br>1920(e) | 1921-22    |
|--|---------|--------|-----------|---------------------|------------|
| 1. Domus<br>Catholicorum               | 14,000  | 16,000 | 19,144    | 21,707              | (k)21,707  |
| 2. Catholici                           | 75,000  | 83,964 | (c)99,434 | 113,936             | (l)113,936 |
| 3. Ecclesiae<br>parochiales            | 61      | 79     | 90(c)     | (f)94               | 98         |
| 4. Capellae                            | 0       | 5      | 19        | 5                   | 5          |
| 5. Oratoria                            | 13      | 13     | 13        | 45                  | 48         |
| 6. Sacerdotes<br>Saeculares            | 114     | 117    | 111       | (g)138              | 143        |
| 7. Alumni in<br>Seminariis<br>theolog. | 17      | 23     | 44        | 30                  | (m)31      |
| 8. Seminarium<br>Parvum                | 0       | (b)1   | 1         | 1                   | 1          |
| 9. Alumni in<br>Seminario parvo        | 0       | 2      | 10        | 12                  | (n)16      |
| 10. Scholae<br>Anglicae<br>superiores  | 0       | 0      | 1         | 1(h)                | 1          |
| 11. Scholae<br>Anglicae<br>inferiores  | 0       | 0      | (d)2      | 6                   | 10         |
| 12. Scholae<br>Vernaculae<br>superior  | 0       | 0      | 1         | 4                   | 5          |
| 13. Scholae<br>Vernaculae<br>inferior  | 102     | 159    | 198       | (i)144              | (p)215     |
| 14. Alumni in                          | 4,200   | 7,694  | 11,096    | 12,542              | 18,303     |

|  |                                  |    |     |        |       |
|--|----------------------------------|----|-----|--------|-------|
| scholis                                    |                                  |    |     |        |       |
| 15. Contubernia<br>pro Cath.<br>alumnis    | 1                                | 3  | 7   | 10     | 11    |
| 16. Contubernales                          | 28                               | 73 | 271 | 268    | 280   |
| 17. Orphanatrophia                         | 0                                | 0  | 1   | 1      | 3(q)  |
| 18. Orphani                                | 0                                | 0  | 17  | 10     | 24(r) |
| 19. Monasteria                             | 3                                | 4  | 4   | 4      | 4     |
| 20. Religiosi<br>(Sacerdotes et<br>fratr.) | 25                               | 25 | 29  | 52     | 57    |
| 21. Conventus<br>religiosarum              | 3                                | 4  | 6   | 9      | 9     |
| 22. Sorores<br>religiosae                  | 60                               | 90 | 116 | 179    | 199   |
| 23. Conversiones                           | (Inter 200 et 300 quotannis) (j) |    |     | (s)479 | (t)-  |
| 24. Catechumenatus                         | 0                                | 1  | 2   | 4      | 14    |
| 25. Prela<br>Catholica                     | 0                                | 0  | 2   | 2      | (u)3  |

## NOTANDA.

a) Quando Ill<sup>ms</sup> ac Rev<sup>ms</sup> Dñs Aloysius Pareparambil, primus Vicarius Apostolicus, Canonicam possessionem huius Vicariatus Ap. cepit die 5 Novembris 1896, ne domum quidem habebat ubi habitaret.

b) Seminarium parvum, Sacratissimo Cordi Iesu dicatum, institutum fuit die 3 Iulii 1901 et videtur primum quid tale fuisse in tota Malabarìa.

c) Indicant numerum Catholicorum et ecclesiarum, deductis fere 2000 Sudhistis qui, *cum tribus ecclesiis* sudhisticis Vicariatus Apostolico Kottayamensi noviter erecto, traditi sunt.

d) Propter novam regulationem Gubernii Travancorensis, scholis Catholicis nocivam, scholae quaedam Anglicae et

Vernaculae in hoc Vicariatu tunc iam existentes servari non poterant nec novae condi.

e) Die 9 Decembris 1919 Ill<sup>m</sup>us ac Rev<sup>m</sup>us Dominus Aloysius Pareparambil ex hac vita decessit.

f) Ex ecclesiis plurimae aedificatae sunt collectis factis ex fidelibus qui etsi non divites et maiori ex parte pauperes, variis modis contributiones pro ecclesiis atque scholis suis faciunt, operariis vero saltem laborem suum ad rem contribuentibus.

g) Nunc inter sacerdotes sunt qui assecuti sunt gradus accademicos civiles et ecclesiasticos.

h) Quando curam huius Vicariatus Ap. assumpsit Rev<sup>m</sup>us Dñus A. Pareparambil, etiamsi erant inter haereticos qui gradus accademicos consecuti fuerint nullus talis tamen inter Catholicos erat; immo perpauci qui Anglicam linguam noverant. Nunc vero sunt multi gradibus supremis accademicis M. A., B. A., B. L., etc., dictis ornati ita ut omnes advocati Catholici in Ernakulam ipsa, quae est Caput regni Cochinchinensis et in qua sunt tribunalia suprema Gubernii, sunt Syro-Malabarenses, ex quibus unus est «Barrister» qui aliquandiu ad fungendum officio iudicis unius supremi fuit electus. Etiam inter religiosos et religiosas sunt qui ad gradus accademicos evecti sunt.

i) Causa diminutionis scholarum indicata est superius sub nota (d).

j) Non potest referri accuratus numerus Conversorum, cum rationes primorum annorum non inveniantur. Numerus igitur hic notatus est medius (average), quantum potuit explorari. Fine anni 1920 conversorum numerus erat 479 uti notatur in relatione data pro illo anno.

k) Nova numeratio non est facta post annum 1920.

l) Nova numeratio Catholicorum non est facta post annum 1920.

m) Inter alumnos Seminarii maioris sunt qui gradibus accademicis ornati sunt.



n) Nunc generatim illi soli qui successus habuerint in suis studiis in schola superiori, admittuntur in parvum Seminarium diocesanum. Inter alumnos huius Seminarii sunt quidam qui gradum B. A. (Hons.) B. A. assecuti sunt.

p) Omnimode contenditur et urgetur ut unusquisque pagus suam scholam Catholicam habeat... Scholae aliquae industriales quoque hoc anno inceptae sunt.

q) Orphanotrophium aliud pro pueris et aliud pro puellis nuper conditum est.

r) Pueri sunt sub cura Fratrum, puellarum vero curam gerunt sorores.

s) Conversionum numerus anno 1920 fuit 479; anno praeterito conversi sunt ad Fidem 799. Relationes huius anni nondum omnes acceptae sunt; maior tamen numerus exspectatur.

t) Hac de re iam in nota (s) dictum fuit.

u) Anno praeterito typographia diocesana instituta est quae edit Orgnium in quo leges diocesanae, statuta ac res omnes ecclesiasticae sacerdotum ac fidelium scitu necessariae promulgantur.

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1°. Anno 1920 canonice erecta est «Unio Apostolica sacerdotum saecularium» et Unioni primariae Parisiensi affiliata. Quae vero Unio nunc habet 80 sacerdotes ut membra et super alias huius generis Associationes in India.

2°. Collecta quaedam «Provident Fund» pro sustentatione sacerdotum senum et infirmorum introducta est anno praeterito et nunc valde florescit.

3°. Societas ad Fidem Propagandam instituta fuit anno praeterito et iam in 70 parochiis diffusa: clerus ac populus libenter dant operam eius diffusioni aequae ac conversioni.

4°. Vicarius hic Apostolicus a tempore erectionis dividebatur in 5 Vicariatus foraneos quorum unicuique praepositus fuit Vicarius foraneus. Sed hi nullam supervisionem ecclesiarum faciebant. Illis ergo officium visitandi ecclesias relationesque

semel in anno episcopo faciendi onus demandatum est anno praeterito. Quum propter officia parochiarum suarum et propter incrementum in numero ecclesiarum hoc munere convenienter ac perfecte fungi non potuerint, mense praeterito totus Vicariatus Apostolicus in novem Vicariatus foraneos divisum est, quorum unicuique praeficitur Vicarius foraneus cum amplioribus facultatibus.

5°. Associationes iuventutis Catholicae pro diversis operibus piis perficiendis et ad scientiam de rebus Catholicis diffundendam quasi quotidie multiplicantur. Ephemerides Catholicae multo plus divulgantur inter Catholicos.

6°. Nulla fere est parochia in qua aliqua confraternitas non est instituta. Devotio erga Beatissimam Mariam Virginem, et eius scapularia publice gestare, considerantur ut honor et signum quo Catholici generatim ab haereticis distinguantur.

7°. Unum ex laudabilissimis et maximi momenti operibus ab illustrissimo et Revmo Dño A. Pareparambil perfectis est administratio bonorum ecclesiasticorum quo consuetudinem in tota Malabaria inter nos existentem immutans, per suam perseverantiam etsi multae difficultates et oppositiones sustinere debuerit, effecit in hoc Vicariatu ut nomina parochorum in omnibus documentis coram Gubernio validis primo loco apponantur, ita ut evidenter aliis quoque appareat praecipuam personam in administrandis bonis ecclesiasticis esse parochum, fabricarios laicos vero esse solum eius adiutores.

8°. Ex tempore quo Praedecessor meus hunc Vicariatum Apostolicum Sacratissimo Cordi Iesu dedicavit, haec salutaris devotio multum progressum fecit ita ut nulla fere nunc sit parochia in qua die primi Veneris mensis fideles multi non accedant ad Communionem et, exposito Sactissimo Sacramento, non adorent per horam. Communio frequens et quotidiana magnum progressum facit.

† Augustinus Kandathil, Episcopus Aradensis, Vicarius Ap. Ernakulam.

## 2.5. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Trichur (Sum. No.V)

### *Vicariato Apostolico di Trichur.*

*Anno 1887.* Primus Vicarius Ap. D. A. Medlycott imprimis erexit Seminarium Parvum cum Schola eidem annexa maioris studii, et operam dabat eradicando schismati, a D. Mellus et aliis facto, quod iam plures ecclesias in errorem induxerat.

*Anno 1896.* Secundus sed primus Syrianus Vicariatus Ap. D. I. Menachery e Malabar oriundus multum laborabat contra schisma et incumbere educationi praesertim puellarum cuius facti testes ipsum Gubernium Cochin saepe gratias agens Domino Menachery. Hac administratione durante, quinque ecclesiae schismaticorum reverterunt, missio pro conversione Iacobitarum incepta est, novem conventus instituti sunt ad puellarum educationem intenti et tandem ultimis diebus schola S. Thomae evecta est ad statum collegii secundi gradus - secundum coll. in Statu Cochin et unicum Catholicorum proprium in Malabar<sup>48</sup>.

*Anno 1921.* Tertius Vicarius Ap. D. F. Vazhapilly revera videt bonos fructus administrationis illius ac Reverendi Praedecessorum, fructus nempe verae scientiae, fidei, et morum. Clerum doctrina, pietate, atque zelo praeditum maiori multum adjuvant fideles et receptione sacramentorum ac devotione erga Ss. Cor Jesu et erga Mariam eos fortes Ecclesiae milites inter tot paganos efficere satagunt. Schisma, melius haeresis Nestoriana, adhuc manet, quamquam statu valde debili, duce quodam nomine Abimalech, qui tamen est villicus a Domino laudandus quia prudenter facit. His diebus pagani et acatholici erga religionem et sectam suam propriam maiorem amorem et aestimationem ostendunt et suam defendere et fortiolem efficere conantur, qui tamen melius religionem Catholicam cognoscunt et aestimant. Conversionis opus meliorem successum habet inter paganos inferioris ordinis et inter paganos altioris ordinis parvum omnino. In territorio Vicariatus sunt media communicationis faciliora et multum iuvant ad cooperationem.

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<sup>48</sup> N. B. - Nel 1921 fu aperto un altro Collegio dello stesso grado in Changanacherry. † P. Pisani.

| Annus         | 1890           | 1897                     | 1922   |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------|
| Eccles.       | 77             | 82                       | 104    |
| Sacerd.       | 80             | 92                       | 96     |
| Cathol.       | 74414          | 76472                    | 130193 |
| Monast.       | 2              | 3                        | 3      |
| Conv. mai.    | 1              | 1                        | 9      |
| Monach.       | 50             | 24                       | 58     |
| Monial.       | 16             | 12                       | 303    |
| Colleg.       | —              | —                        | 1      |
| Scholar.      | 121<br>Maior 1 | 154<br>Maior 3           | 254    |
| Student.      | 6303           | 8835                     | 24625  |
| Orphanat.     | —              | —                        | —      |
| Catechumenat. | 1              | 1                        | 1      |
| Seminaristae  | 24             | 19, parvum<br>seminar. 1 | 57     |

Vic. Apost. Trichur, 16 September 1922

† F. Vazhapilly, Vicariatus Apost. Trichur.

## 2.6. Statistics of the Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam (Sum. No. VI)

### *Vicariatus Apost. Kottayamensis.*

Praesens hic Vicariatus qui post suppressionem restitutus est anno 1911 per Breve «In Universi Christiani», comprehendit 3 decanatus - Kattayam, Kaduthuruthy et Oolayur - et extendit suam iurisdictionem in omnes ecclesias et Sacella Sudistarum Catholicorum Ritus Syro-Malabarici in ora Malabarensi exsistentium.

Praesens Vicarius Apostolicus: Illūmus ac Reverendissimus Dom. Alexander Chulaparambil.

Residentia: Kottayam.

Status progressvs Ecclesiae in Vic. Apost. Kottayam ab anno 1911 ad annum 1922.

|   | Anno<br>1911 | Anno<br>1922 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Catholici   | 29,000       | 35,000       |
| Ecclesiae et sacella                                  | 37           | 44           |
| Stationes   | —            | 6            |
| Sacerdotes (saeculares omnes indigenae)               | 29           | 43           |
| Seminarium  | 1            | 1            |
| Seminaristae  | 12           | 16           |
| <b>INSTITUTA RELIGIOSA</b>                            |              |              |
| Pro Viris   | —            | 1            |
| Pro mulieribus (a Visitatione)                        | 2            | 5            |
| Sorores in his  | 19           | 43           |
| Sorores curam habentes in hospit. Kottayam            | —            | 5            |
| <b>INSTITUTA EDUCATIONIS</b>                          |              |              |
| Scholae linguae Anglic. pro pueris                    | 1            | 4            |
| Scholae linguae Anglic. pro pueris (sub cura sororum) | —            | 1            |
| Alumni in eis   | 81           | 447          |
| Scholae elementares (Vern. superiores pro puellis)    | —            | 1            |
| Scholae elementares (infer.) <i>Lower Grade</i>       | 5            | 18           |
| Scholae parochiales                                   | 35           | 46           |
| Alumni in eis   | 1,875        | 2,484        |
| Convictus (Boerdius houses)                           | 2            | 5            |
| Associato pro iuvenibus Cath. (C.Y.M.A.)              | —            | 1            |
| Conversio   | 13           | 145          |
| Asylum  | 1            | 1            |
| Officina typographica (sub cura Missionis)            | —            | 1            |

## 2.7. Differences between Northists and Southists (Sum. No. VII)

*Differenze fra le due caste o meglio nazionalità dei Nordisti e dei Suddisti - (Stralciato della pendenza del luglio 911 per l'erezione del Vicar. Apostolico Suddista di Kottayam).*

Questi due gruppi eterogenei rispondono al duplice nome che non rispecchia una divisione di caste giusta il noto concetto e significato indiano, ma esprime due razze o nazionalità diverse. Certamente fra Nordisti e Suddisti ha luogo anche una distinzione di grado sociale (aristocratico e popolare) poichè sia per numero che per censo, i Nordisti sono più potenti dei Suddisti, ma essa non costituisce il divario fondamentale o la nota caratteristica dei due partiti; essa piuttosto si associa per *accidens* alla diversa nazionalità dei due gruppi. La distinzione attuale fra Nordisti e Suddisti non è geografica, sebbene la massima parte dei Suddisti si trovi geograficamente nel Sud del Malabar. I Nordisti secondo la tradizione rappresentano i cosiddetti cristiani di S. Tommaso, cioè discendono dagli Indiani che, per opera dell'Apostolo, abbracciarono il Cristianesimo; mentre i Suddisti discendono da alcuni emigrati della Mesopotamia e della Persia condotti l'anno 345 nel Malabar da un tal Tommaso Cana. L'origine dei due nomi deriva dal fatto che nei primi tempi i Nordisti occuparono la parte settentrionale e i Suddisti la parte meridionale nella città di Cranganore; in seguito però i due gruppi s'infiltrarono e si dispersero quà e là, ed ora perciò quei nomi non rappresentano che la diversa origine dal punto di vista nazionale. Questa successiva infiltrazione e mescolanza non mutò peraltro l'atteggiamento dei due gruppi nei riguardi delle loro relazioni sociali, civili, religiose. Quantunque le due classi si trovino in molti paesi sullo stesso territorio, esse non hanno quasi alcun contatto; Nordisti e Suddisti non contraggono matrimonio fra di loro, non frequentano le chiese appartenenti all'altra nazionalità, non vogliono parroci di altra razza; ognuna ha la sua chiesa; ogni cappella, ogni istituzione è o Nordista o Suddista. Naturalmente, come cristiani essi respingono tutti gli errori religiosi dell'India, ammettono l'unità della specie umana, il dogma della creazione, il dogma della Redenzione, l'identità di origine e di fine in tutti gli uomini, la fratellanza

universale introdotta dal Vangelo e le altre dottrine teoretiche e pratiche insegnate dalla Chiesa; ma vogliono tuttavia mantenere inalterato il loro tipo nazionale e vivono perciò in un circolo chiuso, imitando altre popolazioni emigrate nell'India come gli Ebrei, i Persiani, ecc.

## 2.8. Letter of Zaleski Requesting the Erection of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (Sum. No. VIII)

*Mons. Ladislao Zalescki Delegato Apostolico delle Indie domanda la erezione dei Vicariati Apostolici Soriani in diocesi residenziali.*

Mangalore, 5 Dicembre 1908.

Eminenza Rev<sup>ma</sup>,

Stando a Roma l'inverno passato ho avuto l'onore di presentare all'Eminenza V. Rev<sup>ma</sup> un Rapporto sull'opportunità di alzare i tre Vicariati Apostolici del Malabar al rango di Diocesi ed i Vicarii a quello dei Vescovi residenziali, formandone una provincia ecclesiastica colla metropoli *ad Ernakulam*.

Supplicò l'Eminenza V. Rev<sup>ma</sup> di degnarsi riassumere questo mio Rapporto. Ho dimorato ora nel Malabar per due mesi, la più grande parte di questo tempo tra i Soriani e sono stato pienamente persuaso non solo dell'opportunità ma anche della necessità di questa misura.

Era certo un provvedimento sapiente e prudente d'incominciare dall'erigere Vicariati Apostolici, ma ora che durante dodici anni questi Vescovi Indiani hanno dato prova della loro capacità di governare e che (ciò che si temeva sul principio) ora in caso di morte di uno di loro non vi sarà difficoltà di trovare loro successori, non vedo più la ragione di tenere questi Soriani in uno stato che loro considerano d'inferiorità, ed i Vescovi Indiani in uno stato d'inferiorità rispetto ai Vescovi Europei.

Questi tre Vicariati Soriani tengono certamente il primo rango tra le diocesi della Delegazione.

Quanto al numero dei Cattolici non sono superati che dalle diocesi di Goa, Trichinopoly e Colombo e superano poi di molto queste due ultime in quanto all'organizzazione parrocchiale.

Tutti e tre i Vicariati sono divisi in vere parrocchie. Non vi sono beneficii, ma le parrocchie sono provvedute di fondi più che sufficienti pel mantimento dei Sacerdoti. Difatti i Vescovi non permettono che si fabbrichi una nuova chiesa, nè che s'eriga in parrocchia se non è stata prima almeno modestamente dotata.

Molte chiese parrocchiali poi farebbero buona figura in più d'una città d'Europa, le altre sono decenti e generalmente ben provvedute di arredi sacri.

I Vescovi sono prelati capaci e certo non li considero come gli ultimi nell'Episcopato della Delegazione.

Riguardo agli affari si tratta con loro assolutamente come con i Vescovi Europei, ed anche nelle relazioni sociali non v'è differenza.

Amministrano i Vicariati in un modo piuttosto differente da quello con il quale li avremmo amministrati noi; ma anche un Vescovo Americano governa la sua diocesi in maniera diversa da quella d'un Vescovo Francese, e per poter giudicare bisogna guardare ai risultati. Ora, da dodici anni che vien governata da Vescovi nativi la chiesa Soriana ha certo fatto progresso e dirò anche non poco progresso.

Il clero più giovane non è da disprezzarsi. Poco differisce dal clero delle diocesi d'Europa ed è certo superiore al clero di Mangalore che gode in India buona riputazione, ed anche tra i Vecchii, tra quelli che qui chiamano dell'antico testamento, i quali non hanno fatto che studii derisorii, ve ne sono di quelli assai venerabili.

Ma è nel clero giovane che si vede progresso. Non parlo dei studii, ora li fanno bene; lavorano; e si vedono da per tutto segni di civiltà: buone maniere, le loro camere nelle parrocchie sono mobigliate modestamente ma con un certo gusto raffinato. Ognuno ha una piccola bibliotheca di libri teologici ed ascetici bene scelti. Non v'è dubbio che nel momento presente il giovane clero soriano



è superiore al clero nativo di tutte le altre diocesi della Delegazione. La razza poi degli antichi agitatori sparisce sempre di più.

Il popolo poi è d'una pietà edificante. Le donne sono delle sante ed educano i fanciulli nel timor di Dio. I ragazzi sanno tutti bene il catechismo ed i piccoletti che non possono ancora parlare si fanno già il segno della croce...

I Vicariati Apostolici Soriani, come l'ho spiegato sopra, riguardo l'organizzazione interna e lo stato il più vicino a quello normale della chiesa Cattolica, tengono dopo di Goa il primo posto nella Delegazione e non vedo difatti oggi la ragione perchè dovrebbero esser tenuti in uno stato d'inferiorità.

Questo stato d'inferiorità i Vescovi ed il clero lo risentono molto e se ne scoraggiscono, considerandolo come un'ingiustizia della S. Sede verso di loro. Ed è un'ingiustizia, quando si considera che Missioni principianti come quella di Galle, Trincomalie, Krisnagar con rispettivamente 8000, 7000 e 4000 cattolici, e con 15, 12 ed 8 sacerdoti sono diocesi residenziali ed i Vicariati Soriani con rispettivamente 140.000, 93.000, e 92.000 cattolici e 400 sacerdoti si trovano in una posizione inferiore; sorge troppo evidente la differenza che si fa tra Europei ed Indiani.

Viene poi anche la considerazione che nella loro posizione presente gl'Indiani non vogliono più soffrire queste differenze ed è meglio che la S. Sede faccia loro oggi questa concessione, che deve fare anche in giustizia, come un dono gratuito del Papa, piuttosto che di vedersi poi obbligata a farla sotto la pressione di proteste ed agitazioni, cosa che non può tardare, giacchè, stanchi d'aspettare, ritorneranno all'uso dei mezzi coi quali sanno per esperienza che si ottiene molto.

La mia umile opinione è che questi tre Vicariati Apostolici son maturi per essere eretti in diocesi con Vescovi residenziali; che la cosa è dovuta anche in giustizia; che il bene della Chiesa richiede che si faccia; che il momento è opportuno per farlo e non v'è nessun pericolo nè inconveniente; anzi che il ritardare od esitare la detta misura non può che danneggiare ed anche arrestare il progresso della chiesa soriana in India.

E dico questo con un'esperienza di diciotto anni che ho di questi paesi e gente e dopo una recentissima dimora di due mesi tra i Soriani del Malabar. Supplico dunque l'Eminenza V. Revma di degnarsi prendere questa cosa in seria considerazione.

Inchinato intanto al bacio della S. Porpora ho l'onore di rassegnarmi colla più profonda venerazione.

Dell'Eminenza Vostra Revma, umilmo e devmo servo

† Ladislao Michele, Arciv. di Tebe, Delegato Apostolico.

## **2.9. Letter of Apostolic Delegate Pisani Transmitting the Petitions of the Priests of Changanacherry and Ernakulam (Sum. No. IX)**

*Lettera con cui Mons. Pisani trasmette le petizioni dei Sacerdoti di Changanacherry e di Ernakulam invocanti la Gerarchia - ed esprime il suo parere circa le domande di Mons. Chulaparambil.*

Bangalore, 3 Gennaio 1921.

Eminenza Reverendissima,

Più volte nel corso dei miei rapporti all'Eminenza Vostra Reverendissima circa le condizioni della Chiesa siro-Malabarica mi venne fatta menzione della proposta più volte presentata alla Sacra Congregazione dai miei venerati Predecessori dell'Istituzione della Gerarchia mediante l'erezione di quei Vicariati Apostolici in diocesi e la nomina di un Metropolita, designato da Mons. Fumasoni Biondi nella persona del presente Vicario Apostolico di Changanacherry, Mons. Kurialacherry.

Durante la mia visita Apostolica nel Malabar (della quale mi propongo di riferire a Vostra Eminenza Reverendissima dopo la Conferenza plenaria dei Vescovi indetta a Madras pel 7 prossimo Gennaio) in quasi tutti i solenni ricevimenti dati dal Clero e dai fedeli al Rappresentante del Santo Padre fu espresso questo voto con preghiera di umiliarlo ai piedi di Sua Sua Santità avvalorato dal patrocinio dell'Eminenza Vostra.

Mi furono anche presentate petizioni scritte, una<sup>49</sup> in latino indirizzata all'Eminenza Vostra e sottoscritta dalla maggioranza del Clero di Ernakulam; l'altra in inglese indirizzata al sottoscritto e firmata dai membri più notevoli del Clero di Changanacherry<sup>50</sup>. Le unisco entrambe alla presente insieme ad un ricorso in latino<sup>51</sup> del Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam, il quale vorrebbe escludere dalla Gerarchia Siro-Malabarica la *Gens Sudistica* col pretesto che essa non s'adatterebbe a dipendere da un Metropolita Nordista: di qui, conclude Mons. Chulaparambil, l'opportunità, se non la necessità, di erigere Kottayam in Archidiocesi immediatamente soggetta alla Santa Sede.

A conforto della sua tesi allega il ricorso inoltrato all'Eminentissimo Cardinal Prefetto di Propaganda dai tre Vicari Apostolici del Malabar in data 1 Marzo 1911 allo scopo di ottenere la separazione dei Cattolici Suddisti dai Nordisti mediante l'erezione del Vicariato di Kottayam.

Ho promesso a Mons. Chulaparambil di presentare, *non di raccomandare* detto ricorso, perchè le ragioni addotte in suo favore non mi persuadono. A me pare che la dipendenza dal Metropolitano riguardi direttamente il Suffraganeo, non il clero ed i fedeli; e che a soddisfare il legittimo sentimento d'indipendenza dai Nordisti possa bastare la concessione di un Vicariato Apostolico e l'eventuale erezione del medesimo in diocesi senza pensare a introdurre nel Malabar due Archidiocesi quando ancora è sospesa ogni decisione circa l'opportunità di averne una.

Chinato al bacio della Sacra Porpora, con i sensi della più profonda venerazione, godo ripetermi.

Dell'Eminenza Vostra Reverendissima, umilmo e devmo servo

† P. Pisani, Arciv. di Costanza, Deleg. Ap. nelle Indie O.

<sup>49</sup> Tale lettera viene allegata in seguito, pag. 29.

<sup>50</sup> Vedi allegata traduzione, pag. seguente.

<sup>51</sup> Tale ricorso non viene qui allegato perchè dice le stesse cose delle altre petizioni di Mons. Chulaparambil riportate in fine del Sommario.

### **2.9.1. Petition of the Priests of Changanacherry Presented to Pisani Requesting the Erection of Hierarchy (Sum. No. IX, Encl. I)**

*Petizione presentata dai sacerdoti del Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry al Rmo Mons. P. Pisani.*

(Traduzione dall'Inglese).

Noi, sacerdoti del Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry, pienamente e figlialmente confidando nel sincero desiderio dell'Ecc.za V. pel benessere della Comunità Siro-Cattolica di Malabar, sottoponiamo alla benigna considerazione dell'Ecc.za V. i seguenti punti.

Assicuriamo l'E.V., che, pur essendo ora pochi alla presenza di V.E., questa è la voce unanime di tutto il Clero e del Laicato dei tre Vicariati di Changanacherry, Ernakulam e Trichur.

Uno dei più pressanti bisogni che noi abbiamo sentito da secoli è quello d'essere stati privi di pastori di nostro rito. Risultato delle ripetute suppliche alla S. Sede perchè si rimediasse a questo lamentato stato di cose fu che noi fummo dapprima separati dai Latini e in seguito furono nominati Vicari Apostolici di nostro rito che ne governassero. Benchè questa benigna politica della S. Sede fosse intesa a risanare i mali che da lungo ci affliggevano, pure, per quanto riguarda al nostro Vicariato di Changanacherry, siamo dolenti di riferire che la nomina del defunto Dottor Matteo Makil, di nazionalità Suddista, a presiedere ai suoi destini, lungi dal portare gli effetti desiderati, contribuì soltanto a moltiplicare le nostre miserie e lagnanze.

Siamo e saremo sempre grati alla S. Sede per aver distrutto benignamente questo ingiustificato stato di cose, innalzando alla dignità di Vicario Apostolico di Changanacherry l'attuale nostro benamato Dr. Thomas Kurialacherry.

In tal modo, l'elezione di Pastori di nostro rito e nazionalità ci ha considerevolmente aiutati a spingerci avanti nei sentieri della pace e della prosperità. Pure, non abbiamo ancora potuto ottenere quanto noi desideriamo e che i nostri Padri hanno sospirato tanto; non si è ancora ottenuto, in materia ecclesiastica, quella base sicura

che sola può garantire la continuità della nostra prosperità e del nostro successo sotto tutti i rispetti - intendiamo dire che, quello, di cui oggi massimamente abbisognano, è l'istituzione della gerarchia nella nostra Chiesa Soriana. Noi, tutti uniti preghiamo e nutriamo la ferma speranza allo stesso tempo, che V. Ecc.za vorrà tentare con tutto il suo cuore, mediante l'istituzione della gerarchia, di dare l'ultimo tocco all'opera immortale intrappresa fra di noi dai suoi degni predecessori, specialmente da S. Eñza il compianto Card. Agliardi, la cui memoria sarà sempre ricordata colla più profonda gratitudine dalla nostra Chiesa.

A tale riguardo noi non possiamo che sottoporre all'Ec.za Vostra un fatto importante e cioè: che in vista della prosperità e della pace che circonda la Chiesa Cattolica Soriana del Malabar, *la dignità metropolitana venga conferita a qualsivoglia dei Vicari Apostolici di Changanacherry, Ernakulam o Trichur e a nessun altro.* Ultimamente s'è sparsa voce che alla S. Sede ed a V. Ec.za fioccano petizioni che propongono e richiedono il Dr. Alexandro Chulaparambil a candidato per la dignità Arcivescovile, con sede a Kottayam. Se ciò fosse vero, noi non abbiamo il minimo dubbio a sostenere che tali petizioni, che si vorrebbe far credere che siano state presentate da qualsiasi del Clero o del Laicato dei tre Vicariati sopradetti, sono interamente senza fondamento, essendo, per la maggior parte, semplici invenzioni.

La verità del nostro asserto può essere ampiamente provato dalla dichiarazione unanimamente sottoposta alla S. Sede da tre dei nostri quattro Pastori e cioè il compianto Mons. Luigi Pareparambil, Mons. Giovanni Menacherry e Mons. Tommaso Kurialacherry, attuale nostro Vicario Apostolico.

Invocando su di noi la benedizione dell'Ecc.za Vostra ci professiamo.

Dell'Eccenza Vostra Reverendissima, obblñi ed umilñi figli sacerdoti del Vicar. di Changanacherry.

Seguono in originale numerose firme.

Changanacherry, 17 Novembre 1920.

### 2.9.2. Petition of the Clergy of Ernakulam Presented to Pisani Requesting the Erection of Hierarchy ((Sum. No. IX, Encl. II)

*Petizione del clero di Ernakulam per avere la gerarchia.*

Eñe ac Revñe Domine,

Data fausta hac occasione Delegati Apostolici Illustrissimi ac Reverendissimi Domini Petro Pisani primae in ora Malabarica visitationis, filii devotissimi Sanctitatis Suae Syro-Malabarenses Vicariatus Apostolici Ernakulamensis nos Sacerdotes, ipsi porrigimus supplicem libellum ut hunc ad Eminentiam Vestram transmittat et Eminentia Vestra benigne hunc in manus Sanctitatis Suae pervenire curam gerat.

Semel ac iterum non solum sacerdotes quin etiam Vicarii nostri Apostolici singillatim necnon communiter una cum voce Sanctitatem Suam deprecati sumus ut nos dissitis in his locis commorantes exaudiret supplicationemque nostram iustam et constantem maxima cum docilitate ac submissione, fiduciaque filiali atque amore oblatam acciperet et responsum benignum et paternum nobis dare dignaretur.

Apprime notum est Eminentiae Vestrae qui rerum Orientalium tam peritus est et benigne erga nos dispositus Ecclesiam nostram ab Apostolo Sancto Thoma originem ducere et fere per tres saeculos ab Episcopis indigenis gubernatam fuisse. Series horum Episcoporum, aliquando interrupta, usque ad Saeculum XVI continuabatur donec Lusitani primo in India advenerunt. Ob causas politicas iurisdictionem illorum in Synodo Diamperitana nos cogebarur accipere. Sed status hic nunquam satisfactionem dedit nec clero nec populo. Immo anno 1653, rebellio, medium sane damnandum, facta erat ut haberemus Episcopos nostros proprios. Deo tamen adiuvante et Sanctae Sedis Apostolicae gratia anno 1887, nobis concedebantur primo Episcopi separati et dein anno 1896, per Decretum «Quae rei sacrae» Vicarii Apostolici ex nostra gente nostroque ritui proprii a Leone XIII felicitis memoriae cuius nomen modo indelebili in cordibus nostris insculptum semper manet. *Quam efficienter* et quam diligentia

Vicarii nostri Apostolici officiis *suis fungerentur et adhuc fungantur est res ubique gentum nota.*

Ut de aliis Vicariatibus taceamus, Vicariatus, noster Ernakulamensis noviter creatus sine domo quidem episcopali multas habebat difficultates superandas. Attamen propter Vicarii nostri Apostolici, Reverendissimi ac Illustrissimi Domini Aloysii Pareparambil, ingenium et in arte gubernandi peritiam necnon fidelium ex corde cooperationem quae erat fructus naturalis ob Episcopos proprios obtentos, brevi in tempore non solum domus residentialis aedificata est, sed etiam seminarium praeparatorium schola anglica pro studia altiora in Alwaye et pro puellis in Parur, Chengal, et hic in Ernakulam, aliae scholae circiter 200, pro monialibus Conventus novem, multae novae ecclesiae, et catechumenatus diversis in locis. Totis viribus quidem laboravit in rerum temporalium Ecclesiarum administratione iuxta leges canonicas, pro schismaticorum et haereticorum extirpatione et praesertim pro infidelium conversione ita ut in Vicariatu pax vigeat et concordia.

Attamen unum nobis deest ut ad statum perfectiorem perveniamus et progressum ulteriorem faciamus. Ad regiminis Ecclesiastici apicem ascendere nondum nobis concessum est. Ecclesia nostra adhuc in statu imperfecto manet et legitima nostra aspiratio nobis denegatur. Volumus et ardentem volumus ut Hierarchia Syro-Chaldeo-Malabarica instituitur. Hic enim nos arctiori vinculo ita uniet et consolidabit *ut possimus unitis viribus agere ad tuenda iura nostra civilia et religiosa apud gubernia saecularia quae etiam hac in regione introducunt multa contra instructionem religiosam puerorum et contra sanctitatem matrimonii*, etc. Episcopi enim nostri ab invicem sunt independentes nullo vinculo immediato auctoritatis coniuncti ita ut multum patiatur Ecclesia detrimentum. Omnibus his de rebus seriatim disserere necesse non videtur. Si Hierarchia nobis conceditur omnia haec mala eradicabuntur, Ecclesiaeque nostra Syro-Malabarica de die in diem progressum faciens Deo adiuvante et protegente attinebit pristinam gloriam Ecclesiae Orientalis et erit gemma radiosa in Sancti Petri corona. Notum facere etiam volumus Eminentiam Vestram abhinc 24 annis Episcopos nostros

proprios nobis datos esse et hunc annum esse initium anni Iubilaei institutionis Vicariorum Apostolicorum. Propterea igitur ne praetereas hunc annum quin nobis concedatur Hierarchia.

Enixe iterum rogamus Eminentiam Vestram et per Eminentiam Sanctitatem Suam cuius semper gloria est quod peculiari aliqua praedilectione nos Orientales diligit et ostendit hunc amorem instituendo Congregationem pro Ecclesia Orientali cuius ipse est Praefectus ut sine mora preces nostras exaudiret et rem tam desideratam et necessariam nobis concedere dignetur.

Sacram purpuram deosculantes et profunda cum veneratione permanemus

Eminentiae Vestrae, Filii addictissimi et obedientissimi Sacerdotes

Vicariatus Apostolici Ernakulamensis.

(Seguono le firme).

## **2.10. Petition of the Vicars Apostolic to Pisani, Transmitted to the Oriental Congregation (Sum. No. X)**

*Lettera del Delegato Apostolico con cui trasmette una petizione dei 4 Vicariati Apostolici.*

Wellington, 2 Aprile 1920.

Eminenza Reverendissima,

A conferma di quanto ebbi l'onore di sottoporre alla benigna considerazione di Vostra Eminenza Reverendissima in data 27-3-20, N.º 123/20, mi faccio un dovere di comunicarle tradotto in italiano il ricorso ricevuto dianzi e firmato dai quattro Ordinarii proposti all'amministrazione di quei Vicariati.

Eccellenza,

Noi, sottoscritti, Vicari Apostolici di rito Siro-Malabarico e l'Amministratore, sede vacante, del Vicariato Apostolico di Trichur, sottoponiamo alla benigna considerazione di Vostra Eccellenza i seguenti punti:

Sono ormai quasi 25 anni da quando ci furono accordati Vescovi del nostro rito. Poichè fin dal principio, per un privilegio



speciale, noi abbiamo usato il Pontificale Romano per le nostre funzioni pontificali, è stata fatta una traduzione della parte: «Ritus conferendi Ordines», sottomettendola alla S. Congregazione per l'approvazione. Poichè riesce alquanto strano che noi, mentre diciamo *la Messa in Siriaco*, usiamo poi il rito latino per le *Ordinazioni*, preghiamo Vostra Eccellenza ad adoperarsi perchè la Sacra Congregazione per le Chiese Orientali approvi almeno quella parte del Pontificale che si riferisce al conferimento degli Ordini.

Per nostro codice noi abbiamo alcune norme e consuetudini codificate circa 40 anni or sono. Ma perchè queste rispondano alle esigenze del nostro tempo e al progresso del paese, richiedono di essere modificate. Noi ci proponiamo di rivedere le nostre Costituzioni, senza molto indugio. Prima però di accingerci a questo lavoro desideriamo sapere se la Sacra Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale ha in vista la pubblicazione del Diritto Canonico per la Chiesa Orientale, e, in caso affermativo, saremmo grati se ci venisse inviata copia dei canoni, per poter così presentare, per la codificazione, i nostri costumi e le nostre usanze. Se poi la S. Congregazione non intende far questo passo, in tal caso noi, tra breve,  *presenteremo un codice di leggi per la Chiesa Siro-Malabarica.*

Preghiamo umilmente Vostra Eccellenza ad adoperarsi affinchè la S. Congregazione voglia stabilire la Gerarchia nelle nostre Province, concedendoci un Metropolitano il quale possa avere il *titolo di Patriarca*, come negli altri riti orientali, se ciò sembra conveniente alla S. Congregazione; giacchè, nel Signore, noi crediamo, con questo mezzo, di poter attirare alla Chiesa Cattolica gli eretici di questo paese che parlano sempre del loro Patriarca. (Seguono nell'originale de firme).

Chinato al bacio della Sacra Porpora, con i sensi della più profonda venerazione, godo ripetermi.

Dell'Eminenza Vostra Reverendissima, umilmo e devmo servo,

† P. Pisani, Arciv. di Costanza, Del. Ap. nelle Indie O.

P.-S. Ho risposto ai richiedenti che avrei raccomandato a V. Eminenza Revma la loro petizione. Osservo solo che un Patriarca

*di colore* in India potrebbe riuscir ostico agli Arcivescovi *bianchi*, sui quali egli dovrebbe (a quanto mi pare) aver la precedenza. *Riguardo al Metropolita, penso che incontrerebbe il generale gradimento anche fuori del Malabar.*

## **2.11. Opinion of Fumasoni Biondi Favouring Changanacherry as the Metropolitan See (Sum. No. XI)**

*Circa la sede Metropolitana. Parere del Reñõ Monsignor Fumasoni Biondi.*

Mylapore, 28 dicembre 1918.

Eminenza Revña,

Trasmetto qui compiegate all'Eminenza Vostra Revña due petizioni riguardanti l'istituzione della Gerarchia Ecelesiastica, datemi l'una in Ernakulam e l'altra in Changanacherry....

Certo la cosa in sè sembra ragionevole. Nel 1887 Leone XIII separò i Cattolici di rito Siro-Malabarico da quelli di rito latino, ed eresse nel territorio dell'Arcidiocesi latina di Verapoly i due Vicariati Apostolici di Trichur e di Kottayam, affidando il primo a Mons. Medlicot ed il secondo a Mons. Lavigne S. I. che fissò la sua residenza in Changanacherry. Nel 1896 invece dei due Vicariati di Trichur e Kottayam, si eressero i tre Vicariati di Trichur, Ernakulam e Changanacherry, affidandoli a tre Vicarii Apostolici Siro-Malabaresi Mons. Menacherry, Mons. Pareparambil e Mons. Makil. Esistendo nel Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry continua lotta tra i due ele-menti nordistico e suddistico, Pio X nel 1911 eresse il nuovo Vicariato Apostolico di Kottayam «pro gente suddistica» trasferendovi da Changanacherry Mons. Makil che morì nel 1914, succedendogli il presente Vicario Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambil. Si hanno perciò al presente quattro Vicariati Apostolici:

*Trichur:* ha per Vicario Apostolico dal 1896 Monsignor Giovanni Menacherry di anni 61 – Il Vicariato conta 112.462 cattolici dei quali 3697 sono nella città di Trichur.

*Ernakulam*: ha per Vicario Apostolico del 1896 Mons. Luigi Pareparambil di anni 70. — Il Vicariato conta 99.434 cattolici dei quali 465 sono nella città di Ernakulam.

*Changanacherry*: ha per Vicario Apostolico dal 1911 Mons. Tommaso Kurialacherry di anni 45. — Il Vicario conta 156.866 cattolici, dei quali 10.000 sono nella città di Changanacherry.

*Kottayam*: ha per Vicario Apostolico del 1914 Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambil di anni 41. — Il Vicariato conta 29.530 cattolici dei quali solo 1667 sono nella città di Kottayam.

Finora sono quattro corpi distinti tra i quali fino al giorno d'oggi non ha esistito alcun legame: i Nordisti non s'intendono con i Suddisti: tra Mons. Menacherry e Mons. Pareparambil ha sempre esistito contrarietà. Così non è stato mai possibile vederli riuniti in una Conferenza o agire d'accordo. Forse l'istituzione della Gerarchia con la susseguente nomina di un Arcivescovo potrebbe portare una certa unione, e ciò sarebbe un gran bene. Però se debbo dire la verità, credo sia ciò difficile finchè rimangono al loro posto i Vicarii Apostolici di Trichur e di Ernakulam conosciuti da tutti, e credo pure dalla S. Congregazione, come vecchi agitatori.

Conceduta poi la Gerarchia, converrebbe star forti a non andare più oltre, perchè non sarà difficile che comincino a pensare pure al Patriarca.

Ora *la gran questione* è circa la scelta della Sede metropolitana. Quando Mons. Pareparambil mi parlò della cosa, gli domandai se sarebbe egli contento di rimanere Suffraganeo, qualora la S. Sede scegliesse a metropoli Trichur o Changanacherry. Mi rispose che egli sarà contento di adempire il volere della S. Sede, ma il 25 novembre mi mandò la lettera che qui accludo in originale. In essa espone tutte le sue vedute perchè Ernakulam sia dichiarata Sede metropolitana: ne è mirabile la fine!

Il primo argomento esposto da Mons. Pareparambil in favore di Ernakulam è che tale Sede è ad uguale distanza dai punti estremi del territorio abitato dai Siro-Malabaresi, dal fiume Ponnani a nord, alla città di Praccad a sud. Ammetto ciò, ma non vedo la necessità che la Sede Arcivescovile abbia tale prerogativa. Forse esso pensa che l'Arcivescovo abbia ad ingerirsi nell'amministrazione delle

Diocesi suffraganee, o che i sacerdoti ed i fedeli delle altre Diocesi abbiano continuamente ad andare dall'Arcivescovo! E pur ammettendo ciò, le distanze in Malabar non sono gran cosa: da Changanacherry e Kottayam si va ad Ernakulam con cinque ore di battello a vapore: da Ernakulam a Trichur vi è la distanza di due ore e un quarto di ferrovia.

L'altro argomento è tratto dal fatto che Ernakulam è la capitale dello Stato di Cochin. Osservo anzitutto che la maggiore parte del territorio di questi Vicariati dipende non dal minuscolo Stato di Cochin, ma da quello ben più vasto di Travancore. Il Vicariato di Changanacherry e di Kottayam sono in territorio di Travancore, quello di Ernakulam è in territorio di Travancore, Cochin ed English Cochin, quello di Trichur è in territorio di Cochin. Cosicchè credo che la considerazione della dignità di Ernakulam come capitale dello Stato può mettersi da parte, o considerarsi solo qualora si debba scegliere fra Ernakulam e Trichur. Ma anche a questo proposito, se Ernakulam è la capitale storica del minuscolo Stato di Cochin, la capitale di fatto ne è Trichur. Così mi si esprime ultimamente il Dewan (capo del Governo) di Cochin, quando recentemente gli feci visita in Trichur.

Gli altri argomenti sono piuttosto contro Ernakulam. Per numero di Cattolici il più importante dei Vicariati è Changanacherry, poi Trichur, poi Ernakulam. Nella città di Ernakulam i Cattolici Siriani sono meno di cinquecento (il Vicario Apostolico dice 4.000 perchè vi computa i cattolici dei luoghi circonvicini), mentre nella città di Trichur sono 3.697, e nella città di Changanacherry sono 10.000.

Quanto alla priorità di erezione, mi pare, non possa negarsi che il Vicariato di Trichur sia anteriore a quello di Ernakulam.

Ernakulam possiede una Cattedrale (Nostra Signora del Porto) piuttosto piccola e povera: migliore è la Cattedrale di Trichur, molto migliore quella di Changanacherry.

Inoltre, mi pare, non debba omettersi di considerare che risiede in Ernakulam a pochi metri di distanza dalla residenza del Vicario Apostolico, l'Arcivescovo latino di Verapoly con più di 4.500 cattolici nella città.

Se io dovessi scegliere la Sede metropolitana tra Trichur ed Ernakulam, propenderei per Trichur, anche per non avere i due Arcivescovi, il latino ed il siriano, l'uno di fronte all'altro. Ciò potrebbe anche dare luogo a penose questioni di precedenza!.... Suppongasì ad es. che il Delegato Apostolico si rechi cola: da chi dei due Arcivescovi dovrà egli andare, dal nativo o dall'europeo? Sono questioni a cui da lontano si ride, ma qui sono le grandi questioni!....

Se mi si permette esporre la mia opinione *io porrei la Sede metropolitana in Changanacherry*. Non è questa una grande città, ma è città importante per commercio, ed abitata dai più ricchi Cattolici. Inoltre, ciò che monta, Changanacherry è il più numeroso dei Vicariati con più di 10.000 cattolici nella città, con clero forse anche troppo numeroso, con Chiesa cattedrale vasta e bella: inoltre il presente Vicario Apostolico mediante una speciale contribuzione che è riuscito ad avere dalle sue Chiese per cinque anni (l'1% oltre il consueto 5% che pagano tutte le Chiese), è riuscito a dare al Vicariato un fondo che ha già investito in piantagioni le quali renderanno al Vicariato un vistosissimo frutto.

Credo potere aggiungere un'altra ragione in favore del progetto. Mons. Arguinzonis Arcivescovo di Verapoly, una dozzina di anni fa trasferì la sua residenza da Verapoly, che è ormai un semplice villaggio, ad Ernakulam con l'approvazione della S. Congregazione di Propaganda Fide. Il fatto cagionò dispiacere al Maharajah di Travancore, perchè Verapoly è nel suo territorio, mentre Ernakulam è sotto il Rajah di Cochin. Essendo Changanacherry nel regno di Travancore, credo che il Maharajah sarebbe contento di avere di nuovo un Arcivescovo residente nel suo Stato.

Ho domandato sull'argomento Mons. Arguinzonis, ed egli è della mia opinione, in favore cioè di Changanacherry.

Rimarranno dispiacenti Mons. Menacherry e Mons. Pareparambil, ma si dirà che dal momento che essi non erano di accordo, si è dovuto saltare il fosso. Inoltre poi non dobbiamo avere riguardi alle persone che... passano!.....

Chinato al bacio della S. Porpora, con sensi di profonda venerazione, mi confermo.

Dell'Eminenza Vostra Rev<sup>ma</sup>, umil<sup>mo</sup>, dev<sup>mo</sup> e obbl<sup>mo</sup> servo

† Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, Arcivescovo di Dioclea, Delegato Apostolico delle Indie Orient.

## 2.12. Opinion of Pietro Pisani Favouring Changanacherry as the Metropolitan See (Sum. No. XII)

*Circa la sede metropolitana. Parere di Mons. Pietro Pisani Delegato Apostolico.*

10, Miller's Road, Bangalore, 20 luglio 1922.

Eminenza Rev<sup>ma</sup>,

In risposta alla venerata lettera di V. Eminenza Rev<sup>ma</sup> in data 23 giugno u. s. N. 7996 ho l'onore di significarLe che il Vicariato Ap. di Changanacherry sembra il più indicato per la sede metropolitana della costituenda Gerarchia nel Malabar. Oltre le ragioni addotte a suffragio di questo parere dal mio illustre predecessore S. E. Mons. Fumasoni Biondi nella sua lettera all'Eminenza vostra in data 28 dicembre 1918, alle quali io sottoscrivo pienamente, osserverò:

a) che Changanacherry possiede il più importante Seminario, preparatorio del Malabar;

b) un Collegio cattolico maschile affigliato all'Università di Madras;

c) il maggior numero di istituti educativi superiori, di scuole elementari, di istituzioni sociali e benefiche in confronto non solo degli altri Vicariati, ma anche delle diocesi vicine;

d) tre Congregazioni diocesane di Suore indigene con più di venti Case religiose.

Se si dovessero interrogare i Vicari Ap. di Ernakulam e Trichur e gli Ordinari di Verapoly e Quilon, ho motivo di credere che nessuno di essi esiterebbe a dichiararsi in favore di

Changanacherry, ma non lo farò se non dietro consiglio dell'Eminenza Vostra.

So bene che fa eccezione il Vicario Ap. di Kottayam, il quale vorrebbe il suo Vicariato costituito in diocesi (se non semplicemente in archidiocesi) immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede. *Francamente, non vedo l'opportunità nè l'utilità di tale provvedimento, che si risolverebbe in un segnacolo di divisioni e di animosità anche maggiori fra Nordisti e Suddisti.*

Alla suscettibilità di questi ultimi, che non possono provare l'asserita superiorità di casta sui loro fratelli in S. Tommaso e che non sono più di 30.000 contro quasi 40.000 (le cifre son qui davvero più eloquenti di ogni commento) la S. Sede ha provveduto mediante l'erezione del Vicariato Ap. di Kottayam nel cuore di quello di Changanacherry, passando sopra alla difficoltà della giurisdizione personale su fedeli del medesimo rito dimoranti nel territorio degli altri tre Vicariati. Tanto più che l'unione di Kottayam ad una Metropolitana comune agli altri Vicariati Soriani, se in casi rarissimi (come ad es. l'appello al tribunale superiore ecclesiastico) potrebbe importare una cotal dipendenza degli interessati da un Ordinario Nordista, non sembra significare alcuna dedizione dell'amor proprio Suddista, come vorrebbe Monsignor Chulaparambil.

Non ho atteso sull'argomento altri pareri perchè, conoscendo il Malabar, preferisco esagerare in prudenza piuttostochè in fiducia: *ma stimerei opportuno il farlo qualora* la S. C. non fosse paga di queste mie impressioni personali, fondate però su dati positivi e sicuri.

Chinato al bacio della S. Porpora ho l'onore di confermarmi con profonda venerazione.

Di Vostra Eminenza Rev<sup>ma</sup>, umil<sup>mo</sup> e dev<sup>mo</sup> servo

† P. Pisani, Arciv. di Costanza, Deleg. Ap. nelle Isole Orient.

### 2.13. Vote of Msgr. Zaleski on the Constitution of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (Sum. No. XIII)

*Voto del Rmo Mons. Zaleski.*

Roma, 78 Via della Croce, 27 Giugno 1922.

Eccellenza Revma,

Col venerato foglio del 26 corrente N.° 7996/22. L'Eccellenza V. Revma si degna di richiedere il mio parere sulla questione seguente:

1.° Opportunità di erigere in diocesi residenziali i Vicariati Ap. Soriani del Malabar?

2.° Dove, nel caso stabilisce la Sede Metropolitana?

3.° Che provvedimenti prendere per la diocesi di Kattayam, per evitare di riaccendere le animosità tra le Caste dei Nordisti e dei Suddisti.

#### I.

Riguardo la prima questione, cioè: se si deve erigere in diocesi i quattro Vicariati Ap. Soriani del Malabar, rispondo, senza la minima esitazione: *Affirmative*.

Non ho mai potuto capire la ragione perchè si esitava per tanto tempo di condiscendere a questa giusta ed opportuna domanda dei Vescovi Soriani. È una cosa che avrebbe dovuto essere fatta già dieci anni fa.

Di tutte le diocesi dell'India, sopradetti Vicariati sono quelle che si avvicinano il più alla sistemazione normale della Chiesa, con un clero, che differisce poco di quello Europeo e numerosi Cristiani di indole è vero un poco turbulente, ma profondamente Cattolici.

Non esito perciò di rispondere al quesito: *Affirmative*.

#### II.

Al secondo, cioè: Dove stabilire la Sede Metropolitana?



Per uno che conosce intimamente il Malabar, non vi può essere esitazione:

*Ernacolam* s'impone da sè per Sede Metropolitana. È una città di grande avvenire, che diventerà uno dei porti principali dell'India, ed oggi già si può dire la città principale, *metropolis*, del Malabar.

*Trichur*, città di secondo ordine, già decadente, la decadenza poi della quale s'accentuerà sempre di più collo sviluppo di *Ernacolam*, non può neanche essere presa in considerazione.

*Changanacherry* è un luogo oscuro. Non vi sono mai arrivato, senza girare almeno per due ore, come Mosè nel deserto, prima di trovare la strada che vi conduceva.

Stabilire poi la Sede Arcivescovile a Kottayam, sarebbe una pazzia, che condurrebbe infallibilmente ad un lungo periodo di disturbi ed agitazioni.

La Sede Metropolitana deve essere stabilita ad *Ernacolam*.

### III.

L'erezione del Vicariato Ap. di Kottayam, ossia il riconoscimento della Casta nella nomina dei Vescovi, fu uno sbaglio che avrà conseguenze funeste nello sviluppo della Chiesa Cattolica in India. Il male è stato fatto, ed è irremediabile.

Che provvedimenti prendere ora in vista all'erezione di questo Vicariato in diocesi?

Vi sono due alternative: 1° sottomettere questa diocesi alla Sede Metropolitana di *Ernacolam*, formando così di tutti Soriani una sola provincia Eccl. Questo sarebbe la cosa desiderabile. Oppure 2° fare la diocesi di Kottayam immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede, cosa poco desiderabile, perchè sarebbe come una nuova approvazione dell'esclusività della Casta, ed accentuerebbe il pericolo col quale la S. Sede avrà da contare e che può portare alla rovina le più belle comunità Cattoliche dell'India.

Il Vicario Ap. di Kottayam, trovandosi ora a Roma, si potrebbe forse sentire il suo parere, quale dei due provvedimenti gli sembra opportuno.

## IV.

Stabilendo poi in India una provincia Eccl. Soriana, è necessario, prima di tutto, esigere da questi Vescovi, che vengano stabiliti dei tribunali eccl. di prima e seconda istanza, per giudicare le cause a norma del diritto canonico. Non poi un simulacro, come al presente, ma veri tribunali (Cod. c. 1572-1596), incaricando il Delegato Apost. di sorvegliarne l'andamento.

Le solite sentenze arbitrarie dei Vescovi, anche in materia gravissima di scomunica e sospensione, non sempre poi conformi alla giustizia ed a l'equità, sono una delle principali ragioni dei disturbi e ribellioni frequenti in questa contrada.

Il Vescovo, certo, deve punire i delinquenti, ma lo faccia non arbitrariamente, ma in conformità ai S. Canoni.

Inchinato al bacio del S. Anello ho l'onore di rassegnarmi colla più profonda venerazione.

Di Vostra Eccellenza Rev<sup>ma</sup>, devotissimo servitore

† Ladislao Zaleski, Patriarca di Antiochia.

#### 2.14. Additional Notes of Zaleski about the Erection of Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (Sum. No. XIV)

*Note aggiunte da S. Ecc. Rev<sup>ma</sup> Mons. L. M. Zaleski.*

Da quando circa un'anno fà fui incaricato di formulare il mio voto intorno all'opportunità d'erigere in Sedi residenziali i Vicariati Ap. del Malabar, questi Vescovi Soriani non hanno mai cessato di appellare in questa materia a tutti Delegati Ap. Presenti e passati, e probabilmente, per più forte ragione, alla S. Congregazione.

La cosa poi s'impone, sia dal punto di vista della più semplice giustizia come anche da quello dell'opportunità e del bene della S. Chiesa. Perchè dunque tergiversare: Meglio concederlo come un dono gratuito e grazioso della S. Sede, che essere poi forzato di farlo coi soliti disturbi ed agitazioni, tanto più poi che il vicino Sinodo di Bangalore ne presenta l'occasione.

Per schiarire poi la situazione, occorre rispondere a pochi quesiti.

1.° Se convenga erigere questi Vicariati in Sedi residenziali?

*Rispondono:* Affirmative. Non solo è conveniente, ma anche necessario, giusto ed opportuno.

2.° In che modo procedere a quest'erezione?

*Risp.:* Nulla di nuovo o di straordinario, come p.es. quattro diocesi im. sogg. alla S. Sede. Procedere come solito nella S. Chiesa nel caso. Creare una provincia Eccl. con un Metropolitano a capo.

3.° Se convenga interpellare i sopradetti Vicarii Ap. quanto alla scelta della Metropoli?

*Risp.:* Negative. Ognuno dei quattro brama di diventar Arcivescovo, e consultare loro in questa materia, non creerebbe che confusione ed anche dissapori e nemicizie tra loro.

Seguire in questo il precedente dell'erezione della Gerarchia Eccl. in India nel 1886, quando le SS. Congregazioni, scelsero da loro le Sedi Metropolitane e lasciarono ai Vescovi solo l'opzione a quale provv. Eccl. volevano aggregarsi. Cosa poi che qui non si presenta, trattandosi di una sola provincia.

4.° Quale sede si deve scegliere per Metropolitana?

*Risp.:* Ernaculam è già la città la più importante ed ha un grande avvenire, Kottayam e Trichur sono luoghi d'importanza secondaria. Changanacherry è una località oscura, d'accesso più difficile, più tosto un'agglomerazione di villaggi vicini che una città, che neanche si trova sulle carte geografiche dell'India. La scelta dunque sarebbe tra Ernaculam e Trichur. La prima di queste città cresce e, come detto ha un grande avvenire. Trichur invece decresce e perderà sempre più la sua importanza. Non esito dunque di dare il mio voto per Ernaculam.

L'argomento poi di Mons. Kurialacherry, cioè che il Vic. di Changanacherry possiede il più grande numero di Cattolici e di Sacerdoti non vale, visto che è già stata considerata l'eventualità

della divisione di questo vicariato in due, cosa che ne farebbe l'ultima tra le diocesi Soriane.

5.° Se la diocesi sudista di Kottayam deve essere sottomessa alla sopradetta Sede Metropolitana. Oppure eretta in diocesi im. soggetta alla S. Sede?

*Risp.:* Affirmative ad primum. Negative ad secundum.

Ogni eccezione fatta per Kottayam verrà interpretata in tutta l'India come un nuovo riconoscimento *de iure* delle Caste, cosa che avrà gravissime conseguenze per l'avvenire di questa Chiesa. Non gioverà poi a pacificare le menti, perchè appena ottenuto questa esenzione, si chiederà per Kottayam, allegando l'inferiorità dei Suddisti, il titolo Arcivescovile, nuovo riconoscimento *de iure* delle Caste.

L'argomento poi di Mons. Chulaparambil, cioè che i Nordisti ed i Suddisti sono due nazionalità diverse, non può stare in piedi.

I Nordisti ed i Suddisti non sono che due Caste della nazione dei Malayalam assolutamente nello stesso modo, come è Vellala ed i Scianari sono due Caste della Nazione Famulica, i Bramini ed i Ciardos due Caste di quella Concani.

## 2.15. Letter of Alexander Chulaparambil to the Oriental Congregation Requesting Special Status for Kottayam (Sum. No. XV)

*Mons. Alessandro Chulaperambil domanda che il Vicariato Ap. di Kottayam sia eretto in diocesi immediat. soggetta alla S. Sede.*

Eminentissime Princeps,

Gens Sudistica, cuius Cura pastoralis mihi concredita est, a gente Nordistica separata fuit per decretum «In Universis Christiani» die 29 Augusti 1911 promulgatum a Beatissimo Patre Pio X fel. rec. ad *spirituali Commoditati huius gentis satius prospiciendum et ad dissidentium animos conciliandos*. Igitur, si quando S. Congregatio Hierarchiam pro nostro Ritu Syro-Malabarico instituere statuerit, enixe rogo ut hic vicariatus pro gente Sudistica Constitutus erigatur ut Sedes independens a

Metropolita sed directe a S. Sede pendens, et vicariatus hic, propter easdem rationes pro quibus gens in hoc vicariatu inclusa ab alia gente in Coeteris vicariatibus eiusdem ritus inclusa separata fuit per supramemoratum decretum, in *Sedem Metropolitanam sine suffraganeis* erigatur. Dioeceses enim tales directe a S. Sede pendentes et Sedes Metropolitanae sine suffraganeis existunt, pro rationibus Sanctae Sedis notis, tum in Italia tum in Coeteris mundi partibus.

Rationes cur ita a S. Congregatione nunc poposco invenientur in petitionibus datis die 1 Martii 1911 et ab omnibus Vicariis Apostolicis Syro-Malabarensibus tunc in nostra regione existentibus Summo Pontifici necnon Sacrae Congregationi praesentatis<sup>52</sup>, quarum exemplaria his in litteris includo. Si Sedes Kottayamensis sub Metropolita de gente Nordistica Constituatur, timeo ne eaedem difficultates et confusiones repetantur et pax concordiaque nunc inter nos vigentes amittantur.

Postquam necessitatem opportunitatemque separandi Sedem Kottayamensem (seu gentem Sudisticam) ab iurisdictione Metropolitanae de gente Nordistica exposui, populum meum per talem dispositionem in unitate et in pulchritudine pacis ut conservare dignetur Sacram Congregationem enixe et humiliter iterum iterumque peto et maxima qua par est Veneratione osculoque Sacrae Purpurae remanere gaudeo.

Datum ex Seminario nostro in Bramangalam die 8 Dec. 1920, Immaculae Virgini Sacra.

Eminentiae Vestrae, servus obsequentissimus

† Alexander, Episcopus, Vic. Apost. Kottayam.

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<sup>52</sup> Vedasi pag. seg. allegata tale lettera.

**2.16. Joint Letter of Syro-Malabar Vicars Apostolic in 1911  
Forwarded by Chulaparambil in Support of His Requests  
(Sum. No. XVI)**

*Petizione presentata nel 1911 dai Vicari Apost. Siro-Malabar.  
ed allegata a prova delle sue domande dall'attuale Vicario Apost.  
Suddista.*

Beatissime Pater,

Nos infrascripti, Dei et Apostolicae Sedis gratia Vicarii Apostolici pro Christianis Syro-Malabarensibus in Indiis Orientalibus Malabariae oram incolentibus, hac occasione quam iucundissima, atque ut ita dicam, perpetua memoria digna, qua duos ex nobis sua augusta praesentia beare (honorare) Sanctitas Tua non dedignatur, primum gratitudinis pensum persolvimus pro hoc tanto privilegio nobis collato.

Nec alienum putamus hac eadem occasione referre quod tota Catholica atque Syro-Malabarica Christianitas servat indelebilem gratamque memoriam suae Sanctitatis Leonis scilicet XIII immortalis memoriae Pontificis, Sanctitatis Tuae in hoc munere Praedecessoris, qui eorum precibus nempe, ut sibi praesules ex suo ritu et gente concederentur, tandem aliquando exauditis, anno 1896 benigne instituit tres Vicariatus Trichur scilicet, Ernakulam et Changanacherry sub totidem Vicariis Apostolicis Syro-Malabarici Ritus.

Deinde quum nos ad S. Pauli Apostoli imitationem, qui in eum finem ut scilicet suus labor non cassus redderetur et inanis, S. Petrum Apostolorum Principem visitavit in Ierosolymis, et ad satisfactionem oneris nempe ut Episcopi et Vicarii Apostolici certo quoque tempore S. Sedem adeant, Eique ecclesiae suae statum aperiant, simus hic ad S. Petri Cathedram Ecclesiae Centrum, personaliter et per hanc petitionem, opportunum immo necessarium ducimus, quibusdam rebus relatu necessariis expositis, S. Sedem certiore reddere de nostrae Ecclesiae praesenti statu ut eius maiori bono consulere possit; hinc sequentia cum summa, qua par est, reverentia et submissione Sanctitatis Tuae altae et benignae considerationi subiicimus.

Inter Syro-Malabarenses, ut S. Sedi notum est, existunt duae communitates seu gentes a diversa stirpe suam originem ducentes; hinc ab invicem distinctae et separatae cum nomine utrique parti proprio et distinctivo Nordistae scilicet et Suddistae. Qui, etsi alias boni christiani, in vita tamen sociali et domestica et in moribus inter se multum discrepant et ad invicem non bene sunt affecti. Hanc ob causam per 15 saecula sine ullo sive consanguinitatis sive affinitatis vinculo vivunt, nec ad hoc adduci possunt *propter rationem non castarum, sed gentium seu communitatum ab invicem distinctarum*.

Hanc utramque gentem in Vicariatu Changanacheriensi contentam, intra cuius solius limites ambo simul permixte existunt, regit eidem Vicarius Apostolicus isque origine Suddista. In aliis vero duobus Vicariatibus Trichur et Ernaculam, exceptis 3 Suddistarum ecclesiis huic scilicet Ernaculam Vicariatus commissis, unica gentem Nordistarum regunt eorum Vicarii Apostolici, qui sunt ex eadem gente ac ipsi subiecti, proinde Nordistae. Hinc in his Vicariatibus inter regentes regendosque bona harmonia atque consonantia. Quapropter faciunt in omni re progressum, populo cum illis cooperante eosque adiuvante. Indigemus enim absolute recessario populi adiutrici manu, cum revera simus in pressura quoad pecuniam, eo quod non habeamus aliquod pecuniare subsidium sive a S. Congr. de Propaganda Fide, vel a Propagatione Lyon in France, sive a quacumque alia caritatis societate in Europa.

In vicariatu Changanacheriensi vero e contra propter discrepationem et distinctionem unaquaeque pars aegre ferens, quod coniunctim cum altera sub uno eodemque Episcopo regatur, non tantum non cooperant nec adiuvant, sed positive etiam causant certa quoque occasione circa regimen Episcopis difficultatem super difficultatem, et S. Sedi molestiam, etc.; ut v. g. Nordistae praesertim nunc ab agitatoribus quibusdam excitati, ut aliquoties solet, praesentem suum Episcopum tantummodo Suddistarum communitatis bono suspirare praesumente, hinc eius gesta et monita omnino contrarie quam revera est, interpretantes, impediunt, quominus eius iustae mentes adimpleantur, faciunt tot agitationes, hinc causant Ecclesiae detrimentum et religioni

dedecus; et dirigunt tot petitiones ad sui desiderii adimpletionem, etc.

In huiusmodi circumstantiis tales communitates ad diversa vel potius contraria puncta naturaliter tendentes in una eademque ecclesia parochiali, vel in uno eodemque Vicariatu coniunctim regere, est res Episcopis difficillima, et utrique parti nociva. Quod optime probant ipsa facta nuperrima tum Praesulum Archidioecesis Verapolitanae, tum Rev<sup>m</sup>i Domini Caroli Lavigne, S. I. olim in Vicariatu Kottayemensi pro utraque communitate Vicarii Apostolici, qui post varia tentamina tandem compulsi ecclesias utramque gentem continentes, pro eisdem dividentes, populum ab invicem seiunxerunt; immo hic (D. Lavigne) cum S. Sedis indulto fecit etiam ut unaquaeque gens etsi sub se, attamen sub diverso atque proprio Vicario Generali regeretur seiunctim uti diversae communitates. Quod utrique parti fuisse bono quidem maiori patet ex eo, quod post supradictas separationes non solum pax inter eos fuit stabilita, sed unaquaeque pars suas ecclesias et communitatem etiam pro viribus ditare, et decorare conati sunt, idque assecuti sunt.

Hinc est quod etiam Suddistae, licet nunc sub Vicario Apostolico Suddista existant, petierunt tamen pluries a S. Sede et a Dom. Delegato Apost.: in Indies Orient. ut praesens Vicarius Apostolicus Changanacheriensis vel quicumque alius benigne concederetur sibi proprius.

Ex supradictis patet, quod quousque comprehendat hic Vicariatus Changanacheriensis utramque communitatem, nullus erit in eo progressus, nec Episcopus sive Suddista sive Nordista erit quietus; quinimo ipse erit in positione ut gravem crucem semper sufferre debeat ut ex 15 annorum experientia docemur.

Quum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabaricae vel potius Vicariatus Changanacheriensis status ita se deplorabilem habeat, ad huius in meliorem statum versionem, nos tres Vicarii Apostolici, ex utraque gente oriundi, et de nostrorum subiectorum natura, indole et moribus optime gnari, nec non horum maius bonum atque progressum circa temporalia atque spiritualia maxime desiderantes. post longam deliberationem et repetitam inter nos consultationem,



de perturbationibus, rixis, earumque causis radicitus inde amovendis, et de ruptis redintegrandis, invenimus duo (tria) media, eaque sola ad haec idonea quae sunt:

1.<sup>um</sup> Vicariatu Kottayamensi nuper suppresso denuo restituto, huic Dom. Matthaeum Makil praesentem Vicarium Apost. Changanacheriensem instituere Episcopum Suddistarum communitati proprium cum titulo Vicarii Apost. Kottayamensis, qui locus est centrum pro eis, atque Syrorum Iacobitarum Metropolis: et Vicariatu Changanacheriensi alium ex Nordistis pro iisdem, ut unusquisque possit regere suam gentem cum pace, et profectu; quod est magis conveniens, hinc ab utraque parte magis exoptatum atque semper postulatum.

2.<sup>um</sup> Vel ita statuere, ut Vicarius Apostolicus Changanacheriensis sive Suddista sive Nordista, ibidem residens regat Nordistas, habeatque semper Coadiutorem Episcopum ex altera gente qui in Kottayam residens regat totam gentem Suddistarum, sed cum iure successionis in locum Vicarii Apost. Changanacherry; ut sic unaquaeque communitas a proprio Episcopo exclusive regi possit, quemadmodum olim S. Sedes statuerat, ut Archiepiscopus Verapolitanus haberet Coadiutorem Episcopum qui Ecclesiam Syrianam, ille vero Ecclesiam Latinam independenter regerent.

[3.<sup>um</sup> Vel statuere ut in ipso Vicariatu Changanacherriensi semper adsit etiam Episcopus Coadiutor ex altera parte quam ipse Vicarius Apostolicus cum iure successionis in locum Vicarii Apostolici et regat suum respectivum populum.]

His omnibus ergo vere expositis, quod nunc enixe petimus, est ut Tua Sanctitas, instar benignae matris erga debiles suos filios parentalia viscera gerentis eorumque bona atque fausta maxime peroptantis, sollicita de tuorum filiorum faustis ex his duobus mediis quae ad eorundem maius bonum atque progressum per has paucas lineas humiliter et cum confidentia unanimiter praesentamus, potius primum utpote omnium efficacissimum ad omnimodas discordias e medio radicitus evellendas benigne acceptans, filiis Syro-Malabarensibus satisfacere et sic Vicariatum

Changenacherry diu rixarum undis agitatum tranquillum pro semper reddere dignetur.

Tandem ad osculum pedum tuorum provoluti et Apostolicam Benedictionem nobis gregibusque nostris flagitantes.

Sanctitas Tuae.

Malabaria, 1<sup>a</sup> die Martii 1911.

† Mathaeus Makil, Episc. Pral. Vic. Apost. Changanacherry.

† Aloysius Pareparambil, Ep. Pral. Vic. Apost. Ernakulam.

† Ioannes Menacherry, Episc. Prael. Vic. Apost. Trichur.

[Verum exemplare, † Alexander, Episc., Vic. Apost. Kottayam]

## 2.17. Letter of Alexander Chulaparambil to Fumasoni Biondi Requesting Special Status for Kottayam (Sum. No. XVII)

*Traduzione di lettera inviata a Mons. Fumasoni-Biondi dal Revmo Monsignore Alessandro Chulaparambil.*

Roma: 24 maggio 1922

Eccellenza,

Siccome Vostra Eccellenza ha conosciuto il nostro paese, e poichè in Roma siete adesso Consultore della S. Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale, mi permetto esporle il mio pensiero circa la Gerarchia in Malabar, pregandola di fare intendere alla S. Congregazione i miei desideri:

1.° La Gerarchia dovrebbe stabilirsi il più presto possibile. La dilazione in tale oggetto è dannosa.

2.° La Chiesa del Malabar dovrebbe avere una Gerarchia a sè, senza relazione alcuna con i Patriarchi sia del rito Siro-Caldeo che di quello Siro-Antiocheno.

3.° Nello stabilirsi della Gerarchia, la diocesi di Kottayam dovrebbe essere esente dalla giurisdizione del Metropolitano, e posta alla immediata dipendenza della S. Sede come alcune Diocesi in Italia e fuori: ciò per la maggior pace e tranquillità della regione.

4.° Richiederei la S. Congregazione di fare della Sede di Kottayam indipendente dalle altre, una Sede Arcivescovile senza sedi suffraganee, come ve ne sono nella S. Chiesa. Ciò sarà un allettamento per i Giacobiti suddisti, con la conversione dei quali sarà possibile tra non molto, come spero nel Signore un'altra Prefettura o Vicariato Apostolico.

5.° Le ragioni per un tale accomodamento sono le stesse che quelle esposte dai Vicarii Apostolici del Malabar al S. Padre e alla S. Congregazione in data 1 marzo 1911 per la creazione di un Vicariato separato per i Suddisti.

6.° Ogni accomodamento diverso rinnoverebbe con probabilità tutte le discordie precedenti.

7.° Con lettera dell'8 dicembre 1920 io ho esposto brevemente la mia mente alla S. Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale.

Prego pertanto Vostra Eccellenza di fare intendere alla S. Congregazione la nostra situazione, e d'indurla a concedere quanto chiedo.

Con venerazione profonda, ecc.....

(firm.) † Alessandro, Vescovo, Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam.

## **2.18. Observations of Fumasoni Biondi about the Request of Chulaparambil (Sum. No. XVIII)**

*Apprezzamenti dell'Illmo e Revmo Mons. Fumasoni-Biondi nel trasmettere la sopra allegata lettera.*

Roma, maggio 1922.

Illmo e Revmo Monsignore,

Per corrispondere al desiderio di Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambil, Vescovo titolare di Busiri, Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam, invio a cotesta S. Congregazione traduzione di una lettera da lui rimessami dopo una conversazione. Essendo stato per tre anni Delegato Apostolico delle Indie Orientali, mi legano al Prelato suddetto sentimenti di stima e di amicizia. Come Ella sa,

esistono in Malabar nell'ambito dell'Arcidiocesi latina di Verapoly (con residenza ad Ernakulam) tre Vicariati Apostolici: Trichur, Ernakulam, Changanacherry per i Cattolici Siro-Malabaresi nordisti; i Cattolici poi Siro-Malabaresi suddisti che sono nel Vicariato Apostolico di Changanacherry formano *un Vicariato a parte suddista, quello di Kottayam, il più piccolo di tutti contando un 30.000 fedeli*, mentre gli altri tre ne contano ciascuno non meno di 100.000.

Spero che non avrà a male se mi permetto fare in merito alla lettera di Mons. Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam qualche osservazione «in conscientia».

Combino perfettamente *con il primo punto*, ed a tale scopo nel 1918 o 19 inviai alla S. Congregazione un rapporto da Bangalore nelle Indie, dopo avere visitati i Vicariati Siro-Malabaresi.

Combino perfettamente nel *secondo punto*. L'unione delle Chiese Malabaresi al Patriarcato sia Siro Caldeo che Siro Antiocheno non produrrebbe loro il minimo vantaggio. Al presente quelle Chiese sono sufficienti a se stesse; i fedeli sono colti e benestanti; il celibato vi è bene osservato, la disciplina ecclesiastica vige sufficientemente, e meglio pur vigerà quando sarà dato a quelle Chiese un Codice, ed il Pontificale nella loro lingua, cose che furono già oggetto di altri miei rapporti. Non bisogna infine dimenticare che nel Sud delle Indie le Chiese Siro-Malabaresi formano il fulcro della Cristianità sia per il numero, sia per la condizione. Per il che ogni rilassamento della disciplina tra loro, soprattutto nel punto del celibato ecclesiastico, apporterebbe conseguenze funestissime alla Chiesa nascente delle Indie Orientali.

Quanto al terzo punto, mi arride l'idea che l'erigenda Diocesi di Kottayam venisse dichiarata immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede. Ciò per il fatto deplorabile che Suddisti e Nordisti «non contuntur».

Ammetterei la richiesta contenuta nel *quarto punto*, quando il numero dei Cattolici suddisti per mezzo della conversione dei Giacobiti suddisti, si fosse elevato almeno a 100.000. A quanto

comprendo, il movimento felice di conversioni tra i Giacobiti non è così grande come si vorrebbe far credere, e questo stesso movimento dovrebbe essere dalla S. Congregazione e fomentato e vigilato allo stesso tempo, specie per ciò che riguarda i sacerdoti Giacobiti.

Tali osservazioni che mi sono permesso di fare in coscienza, in merito alla lettera che compiego del Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam, sottopongo umilmente alla Signoria Vostra Rev<sup>ma</sup>, perchè ne faccia quello che vuole.

Con sentimenti di profonda stima e venerazione mi dichiaro.

Della S. V. Ill<sup>ma</sup> e Rev<sup>ma</sup>, devotissimo nel Signore

† P. Fumasoni-Biondi, Arc. di Dioclea, Consultore della S. Congr. pro Eccl. Orient.

## **2.19. Petition of Alexander Chulaparambil to Pope Pius XI Requesting Special Status for Kottayam (Sum. No. XIX)**

*Petizione di Mons. A. Chulaparambil al S. Padre perchè il suo Vicariato nella eventuale erezione della Gerarchia sia eretto in diocesi immed. soggetta, anzi in Sede metropolitana senza suffraganei.*

Beatissime Pater,

Alexander Chulaparambil, Episcopus titularis Busirens, Vicarius Apostolicus Kottayamensis, humillime provolutus ad Pedes S. S. sequentia exponere licentiam petit:

Ecclesia Syro-Malabarica tres Antistites indigenas habuit anno 1896 tresque vicariatus apostolicos. Anno autem 1911, quartus vicariatus et alius episcopus dati fuerunt pro Gente vulgo dicta «Gens Sudistica» inter Syro-Malabarenses. Haec gens sunt descendentes Syrorum immigratorum in regionem nostram in saeculo quarto (anno 345) qui adhuc remanent sine ullo nexu matrimonii cum coeteris Christianis et possident paroecias et ecclesias sibi proprias. Altera gens, vulgo dicta, «Gens Nordistica», quae adhuc minus contenta adhuc se habet erga gentem Sudisticam, noluit recipere episcopum de gente Sudistica et fecit eum pati multum. Sancta Sedes, re mature considerata, separavit

ambas gentes et posuit eas sub propriis episcopis, et sic pax et concordia facta sunt in ecclesia nostra.

Quemadmodum, in praesenti tempore, quaestio agatur de instituenda Hierarchia pro nobis, quod omnimode desiderabile etiam ego peto, una observatio et quidem *seriosa* omnino necesse esse mihi videtur, nempe: Eadem difficultates et omnes antiquae quaerelae iterum resurgent si gens Sudistica (seu dioecesis Kottayamensis) ponatur sub Iurisdictione Metropolitae de gente Nordistica. Ideoque necesse est ut dioecesis Kottayamensis pro gente Sudistica sit independens a iurisdictione metropolitae sed directe pendeat a Sancta Sede, sicut sunt plurimae dioeceses in Italia necnon in coeteris partibus mundi.

Quemadmodum Syri immigrati fuerunt propagatores fidei in regione Malabarica, omnino congruum esse mihi videtur ut dioecesis Kottayamensis pro eorum descendentibus *fiat etiam Sedes Metropolitana* sine suffraganeis vel saltem ut episcopus Kottayamensis fiat Archiepiscopus titularis, sicut sunt aliae dioeceses et alii episcopi in Sancta Ecclesia, imo etiam in Indiis Orientalibus.

De his omnibus, quantum cognoscitur, praesens noster Delegatus Apostolicus - Mons. Pisani et eius Praedecessor - Mons. Fumasoni Biondi favorem opinionem dederunt Sanctae Sedi.

Beatissimi Patris benignae considerationi, qui pro nobis viscera paternalia gerit, haec omnia submittit et cum osculo Pedum S. S. in omni humilitate Apostolicam Benedictionem pro se, suo Clero populoque necnon pro omnibus suis benefactoribus enixe implorat et remanet.

Semper obsequentissimus, humillimus servus

† Alexander, Episcopus Vic. Apost. Kottayam.

Romae, die 16 octobris 1922.

**2.20. Letter of Fumasoni-Biondi Transmitting the Petition of Chulaparambil Delivered to Him by the Holy Father to the Oriental Congregation (Sum. No. XX)**

*Monsignor Fumasoni-Biondi trasmette lettera di Mons. Chulaparambil consegnatagli del S. Padre.*

Roma, 28 Ottobre 1922.

Il sottoscritto Mons. Segretario di Propaganda Fide, si pregia far conoscere all'Illmo e Revmo Monsignor Assessore della S. Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale quanto appresso:

Nell'udienza del lunedì 23 corr. mese il Santo Padre domandava informazioni a Mons. Segretario di Propaganda circa la lettera, che qui si acclude, lasciata sulle Sue auguste mani da Mons. Alessandro Chulaparambil Vescovo Titolare di Busiri e Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam (Malabar) in merito all'erigenda Gerarchia Cattolica per i cattolici Siro-Malabarici.

Il Santo Padre dopo aver benignamente ascoltato le informazioni fornitegli da Mons. Segretario di Propaganda Fide, già Delegato Apostolico delle Indie Orientali, gli ingiungeva d'inviare la lettera di Mons. Vicario Apostolico di Kottayam alla Segreteria della S. C. per la Chiesa Orientale, soggiungendo che gli arrideva il progetto di creare, quando si tratterà d'istituire la Gerarchia tra i Siro-Malabaresi, il Vicariato Apostolico di Kottayam per i Suddisti in Diocesi immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede, rimettendo ad altro tempo l'erezione del medesimo Vicariato ad Arcidiocesi immediatamente soggetta.

† P. Fumasoni-Biondi, Arc. di Dioclea, Segretario.

### **3. Final Observations of Apostolic Delegate Pietro Pisani concerning Syro-Malabar Hierarchy**

Apostolic Delegation of the East Indies, N: 3812; Roma, 12 Novembre 1923

A Sua Em. Rma il Sig. Card. G. Tacci, Segretario della S. C. "Pro Ecclesia Or.",

Eminenza Rma,

Riferendomi alla relazione verbale che io ebbi l'onore di fare a V. Em. Rma sulla questione della gerarchia nel Malabar credo opportuno insistere su alcuni punti che mi sembrano meritevoli di particolare considerazione rimettendoli al sapiente giudizio dell'Eminenza Vostra.

1° - Maturità di quei Vicariati Apost. per la loro erezione in diocesi residenziali.

Alle considerazioni da me sottoposte alla S.C. in frequenti rapporti sull'argomento aggiungerò solo l'impressione riportata dall'Arcivescovo di Bombay e dal Rettore del Seminario Pontificio di Kandy assistendo alla consacrazione del Vicario Apost. di Trichur nel Luglio 1921, nella qual occasione essi visitarono pure altri Vicariati Malabaresi.

Il primo mi disse: "Non mi sarei mai aspettato di assistere a tali manifestazioni di fede e di pietà in India. Quasi ho vergogna di ritornare a Bombay".

Il secondo mi scrisse: "Raramente ho veduto in mia vita così imponenti adunate di clero e di fedeli: mi sembrava di essere nel Belgio".

In realtà poche diocesi in India mi hanno dato più consolazioni e meno noie di quei Vicariati Ap.. Numerose e più che sufficienti al bisogno le Chiese e le Cappelle; fiorenti le scuole elementari e superiori; ammirevole la frequenza ed il contegno dei fedeli alle sacre funzioni; esemplare l'osservanza dei precetti della Chiesa; Le Curie Vescovili (come risulta pure dal Catholic Directory) ordinate conforme alle prescrizioni del Diritto Canonico; la disciplina ecclesiastica osservata certo non meno che



in qualsiasi diocesi d'India e Ceylon; Congregazioni religiose femminili indigene sempre più prospere (tre nel solo Vicariato Ap. di Changanachery con un totale di 190 Suore professe e 91 Novizie.); curata la formazione del Clero nei Seminari preparatori (104 seminaristi a Changanachery soltanto) mentre nei Seminari Pontefici di Kandy e Puthempally- per tacere del Collegio Urbano di Propaganda - i Malabaresi si distinguono per pietà e profitto negli studi.

Nessuno meraviglia pertanto che l'evidente condizione di inferiorità in cui sono lasciate da tanto tempo quelle cristianità (nonostante tanti ricorsi) di fronte alle diocesi di rito latino soggette a Propaganda specialmente in confronto dei loro fratelli Malabaresi dell'Archidiocesi di Verapoly, sia vivamente e penosamente sentita così dal clero come dai fedeli e che ogni dì più si confermi la persuasione - radicata anche fra i Giacobiti- che il fatto di appartenere essi al rito orientale e di non dipendere dalla Propaganda costituisca una pregiudiziale a loro danno agli occhi della S. Sede. La recente erezione di Calicut e di ... entrambe confinanti col Malabar, ha contribuito ad intensificare questo sentimento e ad acuire il desiderio di vedersi finalmente pareggiati agli altri cattolici delle Indie Orientali, ed elevati nella Chiesa al livello dei Malabaresi di rito latino ai quali essi non sono certo inferiori sotto qualsiasi rapporto.

## 2°. - Nomina e sede del Metropolita.

Come non ho mai dubitato dell'opportunità e dell'urgenza di addivenire all'erezione di quei Vicariati Apost. in sedi residenziali, così non vedo ragione per cui tali diocesi non debbano essere costituite in gerarchia con a capo un Arcivescovo del loro rito. Riguardo alla scelta della sede, seguendo e confermando con dati statistici il parere del R<sup>mo</sup> Mons. Fumasoni Biondi, ho proposto io pure Changanachery. Recentemente però, poco prima del mio ritorno a Roma, mi vennero riferite voci favorevoli alla scelta di Ernakulam, per essere tale città la residenza del Governo di Cochin, un centro commerciale di prima importanza nel Malabar, destinata coll'apertura del nuovo porto (di cui però è tuttavia incerto l'esito) ad essere una delle prime città marittime dell'Oriente, rivale di Bombay e di Calcutta.

È vero che, eccetto per casi di appello al Tribunale ecclesiastico superiore, relativamente rari, e per le Conferenze inter-diocesane, la dipendenza dei Suffraganei dal Metropolita si riduce a ben poca cosa, ma è pure certo che Kottayam sebbene alle porte di Changanachery non vorrebbe - per le note competizioni di caste - sottostare a quella sede, mentre Trichur, che confina con Ernakulam - allacciata con questa città dalla ferrovia, ha con Changanachery difficile comunicazione (quattro ore da Ernakulam in automobile e 7 ore in battello a vapore). È ovvio pertanto presumere che almeno tre di quei quattro Vicariati Ap. preferirebbero come Metropolitana Ernakulam, città inoltre designata alla preminenza da altre ragioni o già accennate o ben note alla S.C. Se però prevalessse tale criterio, vorrei ancora pregare Vostra Eminenza R<sup>ma</sup> di voler prendere in benevola considerazione il desiderio già da me manifestato che sia conferita all'attuale Vicario Ap. di Changanachery Mons. Th. Kurialacherry (personalmente il più indicato per la dignità di Arcivescovo) a titolo, oserei dire, di legittimo compenso, la nomina ad Assistente al Soglio Pontificio con decreto contemporaneo alla costituzione della gerarchia.

3°. - Quanto alle vive e ripetute istanze del Vicario Ap. di Kottayam per ottenere che la sua sede venga eretta in Archidiocesi o almeno in diocesi immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede non avrei nulla da aggiungere a quanto ebbi già da riferire alla S.C. sull'argomento.

Chinato al bacio della S. Porpora ho l'onore di confermarmi con profonda venerazione

di Vostra Eminenza Rev<sup>ma</sup>, Umilissimo devotissimo servo  
P. Pisani, Arciv. di Costanza, Delegato Ap. nelle Indie Or.-

#### 4. Decisions of the Plenary Meeting of the Oriental Congregation on 3 December 1923

In Comitiis Generalibus Sacrae Congregationis pro Ecclesia Orientali habitis die 3 Decembris 1923, quibus interfuerunt Eñi ac Rñi Patres Cardinales Vico, Van Rossum, Scapinelli, Tacci Secretarius, Bonzano, Gasquet et Ehrle, = Sulla costituzione della Gerarchia Ecclesiastica per i Siro-Malabaresi, = ad dubia:

1°. Se convenga erigere i Vicariati Apostolici Siro-Malabaresi in Sedi residenziali.

Quatenus affirmative:

2°. Se convenga lasciarli tutti immediatamente soggetti alla S. Sede.

Quatenus negative:

3°. Se e quale delle erigende diocesi convenga scegliere per la Sede Metropolitana.

Quatenus affirmative:

4°. Se convenga dichiarare la diocesi suddista di Kottayam immediatamente soggetta alla S. Sede.

5°. Se e quale altri provvedimenti convenga adottare;

referente Eño Bonzano, loco Eñi Vannutelli, respondendum censuerunt:

Ad primum: affirmative.

Ad secundum: negative.

Ad tertium: Affirmative con sede ad Ernakulam.

Ad quartum: Negative.

Ad quintum: Affirmative et ad mentem.

Mens est: 1°. Si inculchi la compilazione di uno schema di Sinodo da sottoporre per l'approvazione alla S. Sede.

2°. Si curi l'edizione di libri liturgici necessari, sottoponendoli alla previa approvazione della S. Congre.

3°. Riguardo alle attribuzioni dell'Arcivescovo Metropolitano si seguano per ora le disposizioni del nuovo Codice di Diritto Canonico, congrua congruis referendo.

Ita est

S. Card. Bonzano

## 5. Apostolic Constitution *Romani Pontifices* Erecting the Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church

Pius Episcopus, Servus servorum Dei, Ad perpetuam rei memoriam

Romani Pontifices, qui si rigide sane ac severe fidei et morum integritatem omni tempore defenderunt, libenter contra permiserunt, ut singulae Ecclesiae suos ritus suamque servarent liturgiam, Orientales Ecclesias praecipuo amore semper dilexerunt.

Huiusmodi Praedecessorum Nostrorum dilectionem, non minus quam aliae, etiam Ecclesia Syro-Malabarica experta est, quippe quae plurima ab Apostolica Sede acceperit beneficia.

Iure equidem. Nam Ecclesia illa nobilem inter Orientales obtinet locum, quum originem ducat ex antiquissimis christianis communitatibus, quae a Thoma Apostolo lucem Evangelii receperunt. Apostolus enim ille, ut vetera literarum monumenta testantur, Christo in caelos recepto, in regionibus Indiae finitimis Evangelium praedicavit, ac demum in paeninsulam ultra Indum migravit, ibique – ut fel. rec. Leo Papa decimus tertius, sapientissimus Praedecessor Noster, in suis Apostolicis sub plumbo litteris *Humanae salutis auctor*, kalendis septembris anni Domini millesimi octingentesimi octogesima sexti Romae datis, refert – "difficillima peregrinatione suscepta, gravissimis exantlatis laboribus, primus eas gentes christianae veritatis luce collustravit, redditoque summo animarum Pastori sanguinis sui testimonio, ad sempiterna in caelis praemia evocatus est".

Apostoli vero memoria, etiam post eius gloriosam mortem, in India permansit. Qua de re idem Praedecessor Noster in praefatis litteris haec scribit: "Exinde Apostolum praeclare de ea regione meritum colere India non omnino intermisit; in vetustissimis libris

liturgicarum precum allisque illarum Ecclesiarum monumentis Thomae nomen et laudes celebrari consueverunt, atque, insequentibus saeculis, post ipsam errorum luctuosam propagationem, nequaquam est eius deleta memoria; itemque fides, quam ille disseminaverat, tametsi intermortua iacuit, non tamen exstincta funditus esse visa est".

Thomae praedicationis et martyrii fama regioni Syro-Malabaricae praecipue inhaesit. Christifideles enim illam regionem incolentes "Christiani divi Thomae" semper appellati sunt, qua denominatione ipsi tantum in India – quod notatu dignum est – insigniti fuerunt, atque penes illos multa exstant pervetusta templa eidem Apostolo dicata, et plurimi inveniuntur qui *Thomae* nomen filiis suis in baptismo imponunt.

Malabarenses itaque, quamquam, et propter temporum adiuncta et propter ingens locorum intervallum, quod difficillima cum orbe occidentali commercia reddebat per tot saecula, ab Apostolica Sede seiuncti, numquam tamen christianam fidem omnino amiserunt.

Ex quo evenit ut primi Missionarii, qui saeculo decimo sexto in Indiam appulerunt, in incolis regionis Malabaricae, qui fidem christianam, licet laeuescentem, servabant, "bonam terram" invenerint, ad recipiendum verbum Dei, quod ipsi serebant, valde aptam.

Deo autem propitio, et primi illi Missionarii, et alii qui, eorum vestigia insequentes, in eandem regionem postea migravere, exoptatum fructum ex suis laboribus consecuti sunt.

In dies enim crevit numerus christianorum Syro-Malabarensium, qui doctrinam catholicam et cum Sede Romana communionem amplexati sunt.

Temporum autem progressu talia suae fidei et erga Petri Cathedram devotionis christiani illi exhibuerunt testimonia, ut fel. rec. Leo Papa decimus tertius, Praedecessor Noster, anno millesimo octingentesimo octogesimo septimo, catholicorum ritus Syro-Malabarici peculiari curae prospiciens, ac "ut eorum fidem, obedientiam et devotionem erga Apostolicam Sedem aliquo modo remuneraret, utque penes ipsos vera Christi Ecclesia maiora in dies

incrementa susciperet", per Breve *Qnod iam pridem*, die vigesima mensis maii datum, rituali separatione catholicorum Syro-Malabarensium a Latinis peracta, ipsos ab Ecclesia Verapolitana, cui addicti erant, seiunxit, et duos pro illis vicariatus apostolicos constituit, committendos Episcopis Latini ritus, qui vero sibi Vicarium generalem Syro-Malabarenssem assumerent, ac alios quatuor ecclesiasticos viros eiusdem gentis et ritus, quorum consilio in omnibus ecclesiasticis negotiis uterentur.

Tunc itaque, per territorialem divisionem a flumine *Aluway* ductam, duo vicariatus apostolici constituti sunt pro Syro-Malabarensibus, septentrionalis unus, cum ordinaria residentia in urbe *Trichur*, a qua vicariatus ipse *Trichuriensis* appellatus est, meridionalis alter, cum ordinaria residentia in urbe *Kottayam*, a qua vicariatus propriam denominationem, *Kottayamensem* nempe, tulit.

Anno vero millesimo octingentesimo nonagesimo sexto idem Praedecessor Noster Leo Papa decimus tertius, attentis locorum temporumque adiunctis, "ad novum benevolentiae argumentum erga Syro-Malabarenssem Ecclesiam exhibendum, et ad spiritali emolumento fidelium illarum regionum consulendum", per Breve *Quae rei sacrae*, die decima octava mensis iulii datum, nova inita totius regionis circumscriptione, tres pro Syro-Malabarensibus vicariatus apostolicos, Sanctae Sedi immediate subiectos, constituit, videlicet *Trichuriensem*, *Ernaculamensem* et *Changanacherensem*, quorum territorium eatenus patere voluit, quatenus patebat duplex prior vicariatus, Trichurensis nempe et Kottayamensis. Singulorum autem novorum vicariatuum limites per idem Breve accurate definivit. Quod autem notatu diguum est, quia ecclesiasticae hierarchiae Praesulibus eiusdem gentis et ritus concreditae signat initium, idem Summus Pontifex tribus, quos supra diximus, novis apostolicis vicariatibus tres Antistites, ex ipso Syro-Malabarico populo ritumque delectos, praeficiendos censuit et curavit.

Anno autem millesimo nongentesimo decimo primo, fel. rec. Pius Papa decimus, Praedecessor Noster, preces a tribus Vicariis Apostolicis Syro-Malabarensibus Apostolicae Sedi oblatas benigne excipiens, re mature perpensa, per Breve *In universi christiani*, die

vigesima nona mensis augusti eiusdem anni datum, a duplici vicariatu apostolico Ernaculamensi et Changanacherensi omnes paroecias et ecclesias, Suddisticae, quam vocant, genti pertinentes, dismembravit, easque in novum apostolicum vicariatum, cum residentia in urbe *Kottayam*, ac propterea *Kottayamensem* nuncupandum, constituit. Exinde Ecclesiae Malabaricae, qui adhuc permanet, status, initium habuit, divisio nempe illius christianitatis in quatuor vicariatus apostolicos, *Trichurensem* videlicet, *Ernaculamensem*, *Changanacherensem* et *Kottayamensem*.

A die autem, qua fideles ritus Syro-Malabarici proprii ritus et nationis obtinuerunt Antistites, omnimode salutare fecerunt progressus. Non solum, enim, penes ipsos crevit numerus religiosarum vocationum, valdeque est auctus numerus conversionum, sed et magnum habuere incrementum religiosa instituta, utpote catechumenatus, scholae, religiosae domus, ecclesiae et oratoria, unde luculenter patet quam sedulo ac prudenter gregem sibi commissum Praesules nationis Syro-Malabarensis regant. Concors itaque fuit hoc tempore Apostolicorum in India Orientali Delegatorum sententia, christianas communitates Syro-Malabaricas longe inter meliores Indiae universae censendas esse.

Aequum igitur ac rectum existimandum est quod fideles, sacerdotes et maxime Antistites ritus Syro-Malabarici saepe ab Apostolica Sede flagitarunt, ut, nempe, Ecclesiae illi concederetur perfecta et stabilis constitutio ecclesiastica, cuius tanta vis est ad tutandam vitae christianae disciplinam salutemque populis pariendam.

Quapropter Nos, prae oculis habentes egregiam apud Syro-Malabarenses rei catholicae temperationem, eorumque vere consentaneos christianae professioni mores, singularem erga Beatissimam Virginem Mariam pietatem, atque in clerum, in Episcopos, praecipueque in hanc Apostolicam Sedem summam observantiam; praehabita sententia dilectorum filiorum Nostrorum S. R. E. Cardinalium Sacrae Congregationi pro Ecclesia Orientali praepositorum, qui unanimiter censuerunt ad ecclesiasticae hierarchiae ritus Syro-Malabarici constitutionem tandem deveniendum esse, oblati precibus annuendum statuimus.

Suppleto igitur, quatenus opus sit, quorum intersit vel sua interesse praesumant, consensu, Apostolicae potestatis plenitudine, quatuor vicariatus apostolicos Syro-Malabarenses, in totidem sedes residentiales constituimus, quarum unam, *Ernaculamensem* videlicet, ad Ecclesiae Metropolitanae gradum et dignitatem evehimus et extollimus, ipsi propterea concedentes, eiusque pro tempore Archiepiscopis, omnia et singula iura, privilegia, honores et praerogativas, quae ipsis pertinent ex iure communi, et iuxta legitimas praescriptiones et legitimas consuetudines Ecclesiae Syro-Malabaricae, imprimis vero facultatem pro Archiepiscopis Pallio iuxta liturgicas leges utendi, in sacro Consistorio tamen antea postulando.

Tres alias sedes, *Changanacherensem* videlicet, *Trichuriensem* et *Kottayamensem* ad Ecclesiarum Cathedralium gradum et dignitatem pariter evehimus, ipsisque propterea, earumque pro tempore Episcopis, tribuentes iura, privilegia, honores et praerogativas, quae eisdem competunt ex iure communi et iuxta praescriptiones et legitimas consuetudines Ecclesiae Syro-Malabaricae. Quas cathedrales Ecclesias, earumque pro tempore Episcopos, suffraganeas constituimus metropolitanae Ecclesiae Ernaculamensi.

Limites tum archidioecesis Ernaculamensis, tum dioecesium Changanacherensis, Trichuriensis et Kottayamensis, iidem erunt ac limites qui hucusque singulis vicariatibus apostolicis, in sedes residentiales modo evectis, proprii erant.

Ad clericorum et fidelium iura et onera quod attinet, ac tum archidioecesis, tum dioecesium, sede vacante, regimen, aliaque huiusmodi, servanda iubemus quae sacri canones et legitimae consuetudines Ecclesiae Syro-Malabaricae statuunt ac praescribunt.

Tum Archiepiscopi Ernaculamensis, tum Episcoporum Changanacherensis, Trichuriensis et Kottayamensis cura erit aptiorem ecclesiam in urbibus *Ernakulam*, *Changanacherry*, *Trichur* et *Kottayam* eligere, in qua sedes et cathedra, sive archiepiscopalis, sive episcopalis, sit constituenda. Quas proinde ecclesias Nos, ex nunc, ad gradum et dignitatem sive



Metropolitanae sive Cathedralium extollimus; simulque iubemus eas ecclesias, si parochiales fuerint, eandem etiam in posterum parochialitatem servare.

Praesentes autem Litteras et in eis contenta quaecumque, etiam ex eo quod quilibet, quorum interest, vel sua interesse praesumant, auditi non fuerint, vel praemissis non consenserint, etiam si expressa, specifica et individua mentione digni sint, nullo unquam tempore de subreptionis, vel obreptionis, aut nullitatis vitio, seu intentionis Nostrae, vel quolibet alio, licet subatantiali et inexcogitato defectu notari, impugnari vel in controversiam vocari posse, sed eas, tamquam ex certa scientia ac potestatis plenitudine factas et emanatas, perpetuo validas existere et fore, suosque plenarios et integros effectus sortiri et obtinere, atque ab omnibus ad quos spectat inviolabiliter observari debere, et si secus super his a quocumque, quacumque auctoritate, scienter vel ignoranter contigerit attentari, irritum prorsus et inane esse et fore volumus ac decernimus.

Hisce itaque, ut supra, constitutis, ad eadem omnia exsequenda deputamus Nostrum in India Orientali Apostolicum Delegatum, ei propterea tribuentes necessarias et oportunas facultates, etiam subdelegandi, ad effectum de quo agitur, alium virum, in officio vel ecclesiastica dignitate constitutum, ac definitive sententiam dicendi de quavis difficultate vel oppositione in executionis actu oritura, facto insuper eidem onere ad Sacram Congregationem pro Ecclesia Orientali, infra sex menses a praesentibus Litteris datis, authenticum exemplar mittendi peractae executionis huius Nostri mandati.

Volumus denique ut harum Litterarum transumptis, etiam impressis, manu tamen alicuius Notarii publici subscriptis et sigillo alicuius viri in ecclesiastica dignitate constituti munitis, eadem prorsus tribuatur fides, quae hisce Litteris tribueretur, si originaliter exhibitae vel ostensae forent.

Non obstantibus, quatenus opus sit, regulis in synodalibus, provincialibus, generalibus universalibusque Conciliis editis, specialibus vel generalibus constitutionibus et ordinationibus Apostolicis, et quibusvis aliis Romanorum Pontificum

praedecessorum Nostrorum dispositionibus, ceterisque contrariis quibuscumque.

Nemini ergo quae hisce Litteris Nostris erectionis, evectionis, statuti, mandati, derogationis et voluntatis Nostrae decreta sunt, infringere, vel iis contraire liceat.

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